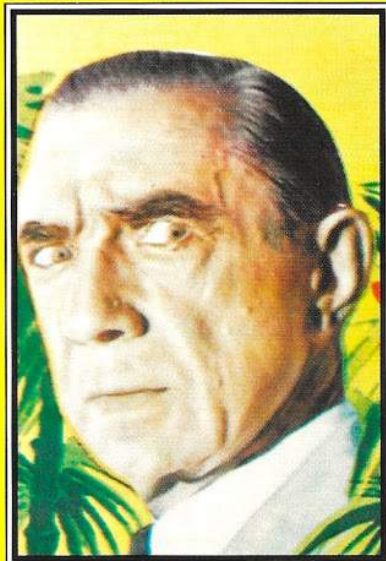


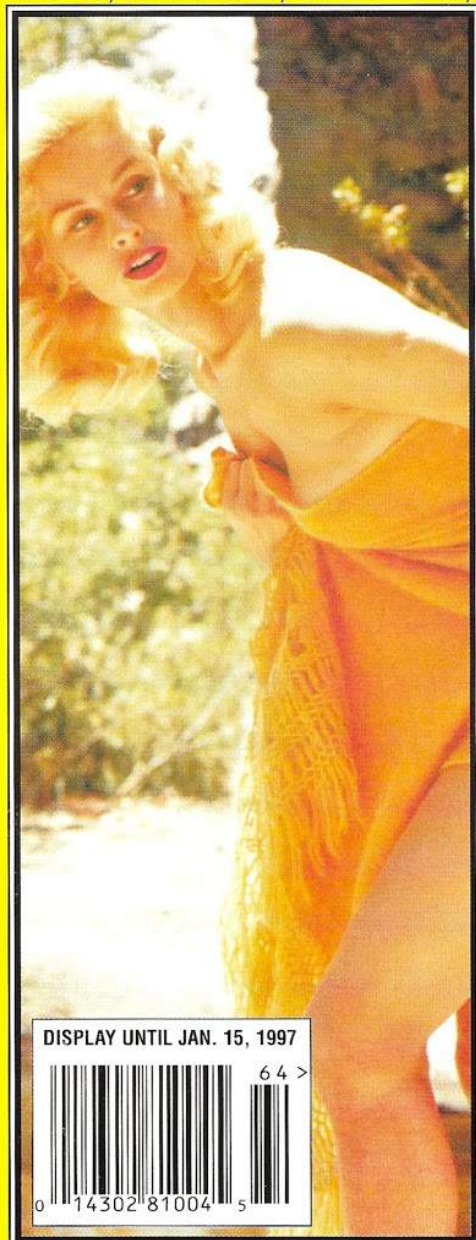
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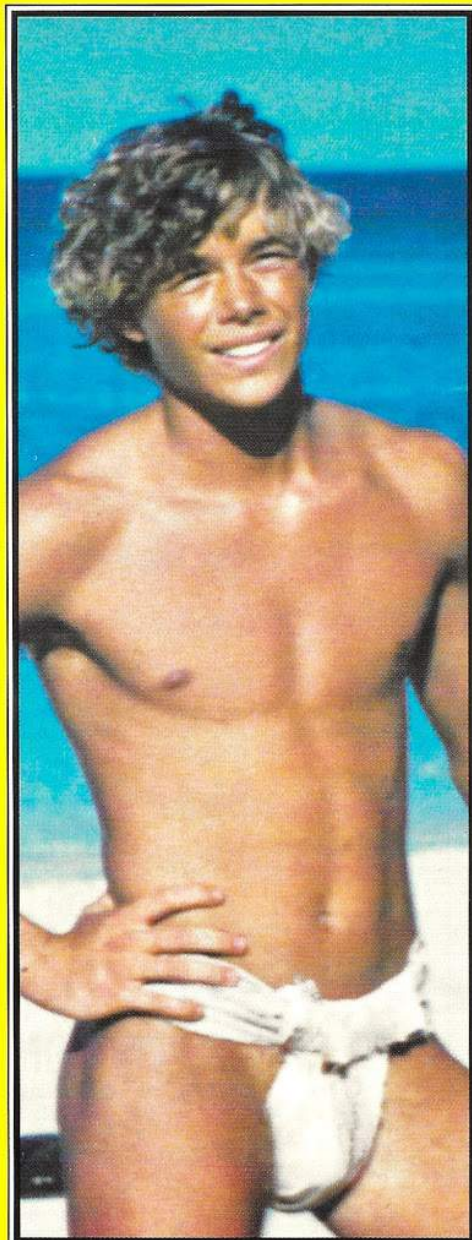
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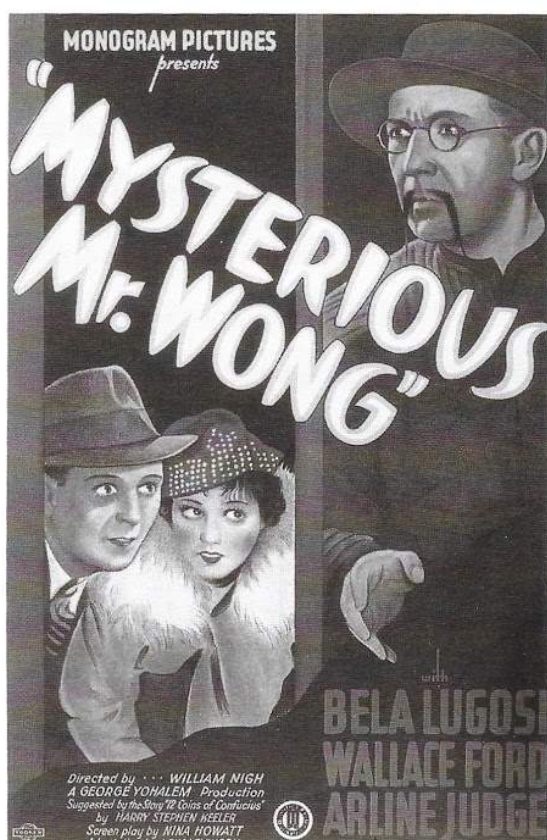




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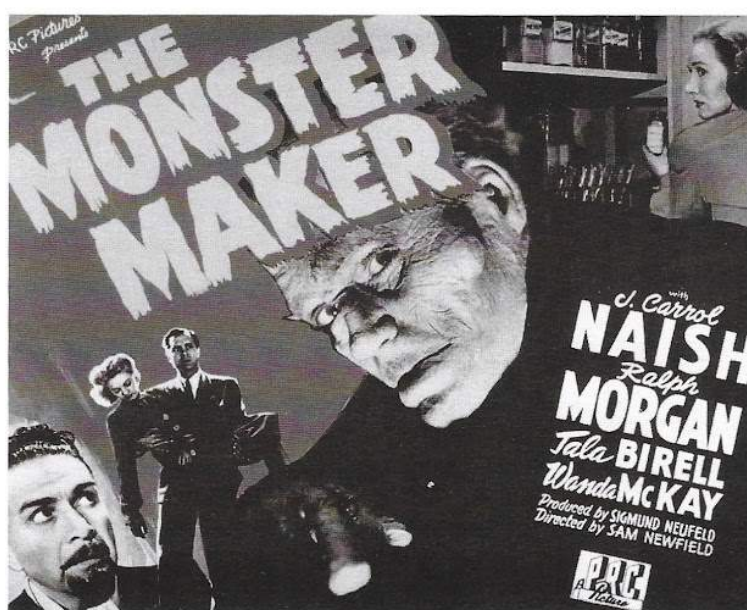
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PRINTED BY  
Megascan, St-Lin, Québec

#### SPECIAL THANKS

Christopher Atkins, Kevin Clement, James Dubin, Don Glut, Ray Harryhausen, Harriet Harvey, Cortlandt Hull, Bruce Kimmel, Randal Kleiser, Joe Lara, Eva Marie Lopez, Irish McCalla, Michael McGreevey, Cris Phillips, Paul Siegel, Sinister Cinema

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COVER: Bela Lugosi in BELA LUGOSI MEETS A BROOKLYN GORILLA, Irish McCalla in a towel, King Kong in New York (Photofest), and Chris Atkins in heat.



# Scarlet Letters

Congratulations on your magazine in general—and in particular on your pieces concerning Jeremy Brett. Beautifully handled.

Jeremy Paul  
Teddington, England  
Jeremy Paul (*Scarlet Street* #4) is the Edgar-winning writer of some of Granada's finest Sherlock Holmes episodes, including *THE SPECKLED BAND*, *THE MUSGRAVE RITUAL*, and *THE MASTER BLACKMAILER*.

Immensely enjoyed *Scarlet Street* #22 on the long flight home from Fanex. I especially liked the interviews with Irving Gertz and Herman Stein by Richard Scrivani. Stein's a hoot! Hope we hear more from this talented composer. Glad you've invited our mentor, Forrest J Ackerman, on board after his ousting from FM. Now there's a column I'll never miss.

I absolutely loved Ronald Dale Garmon's highly perceptive piece on Alfred Hitchcock. What a dynamic, insightful analysis! Where did you get this guy—he's brilliant! I must admit, though, I felt very uncomfortable reading his review of *Midnight Marquee's* Lugosi book. I'm not really a big Bela fan and I haven't finished the book yet, but so far I'm enjoying the hell out of it. I've only read one of the pieces Ron slammed—the essay on *DRACULA*, but I thought Bret Wood's analysis was right on the money and then some! (And I like his descriptive adjectives, too.)

To tell you the truth, my beef with the book has to do with print size. It may not be a problem for most people, but my eyesight is failing. I can barely read my own book, *Cheap Tricks and Class Acts*, without an eyeglass, and I really needed it for this one.

Again, congrats on yet another fabulous issue.

John J. J. Johnson  
Keizer, OR

Kathleen and I want to thank you so much for the splendid job you did on the *MONSTROUS MOV-*

*IE MUSIC* article (*Scarlet Street* #22), as well as the two interviews. Richard Scrivani raved about how well-edited the interviews were, and both composers loved the pieces so much that they plan to send copies of the magazine to their friends and family. Thanks for helping to call attention to these two unjustly-neglected composers.

Your kind words concerning our project mean an awful lot to us, and we think it will help us in our publicity. Everywhere we go we bring along our copies of *Scarlet Street*, so I hope we're able to turn a few new readers on to your excellent magazine.

David Schecter  
Monstrous Movie Music  
Burbank, CA



Congratulations on your first issue in the new format; I especially like the glossy pages (no more borscht stains!), and Forrest Ackerman's new feature, *CRIMSON CHRONICLES*.

Thanks heaps for Richard Scrivani's *SCI-FI SERENADE* and his conversations with Irving Gertz and Herman Stein; truly fascinating stuff. I also enjoyed Amanda McBroom's recollections of her father, David Bruce. As always, your reviews continue to be informative and invigorating reading.

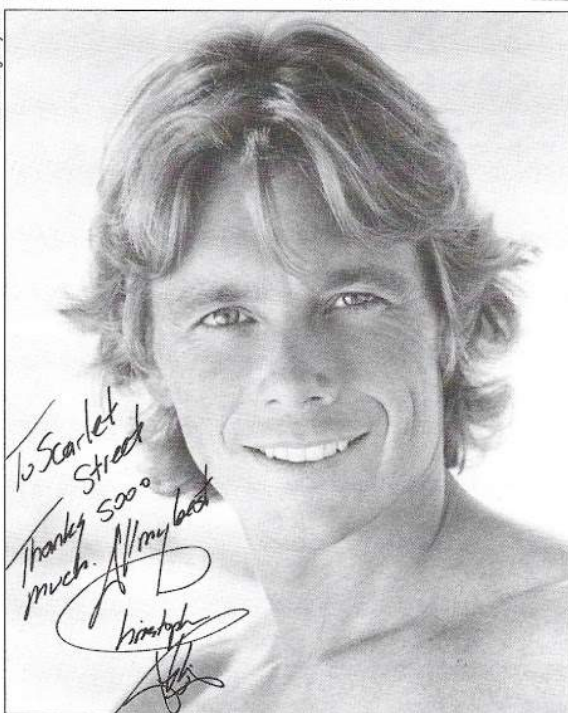
However, if my vote means anything, please, no more in the vein of Boze Hadleigh's interview with Anne Baxter. I choose to remember Vincent Price for his theater, film, and television work rather than for various sexual encounters, heterosexual or other, real or speculative. As Mr. Price is no longer here to defend himself, and Ms. Baxter herself is long gone, the piece seems to me to be in very questionable taste. I'm not saying there isn't an audience for it, but it's not what I look for in *Scarlet Street*, and if this is at all representative of things to come, then I respectfully abstain.

Still, I'm looking forward to Issue #23 this autumn, and wish you all the very best of luck.

Richard Harland Smith  
New York, NY

I was feeling rather depressed when I purchased *Scarlet Street* #22. It had just been announced that Nicole Simpson's sister was selling nude photos of her late sibling and I was pondering how rancid and utterly revolting our society had become. However, upon reading the new *Scarlet Street*, particularly *ALL ABOUT ANNE*, I did not feel so bad anymore. After all, if a popular periodical like *SS* can make money off the dead bodies of Vincent

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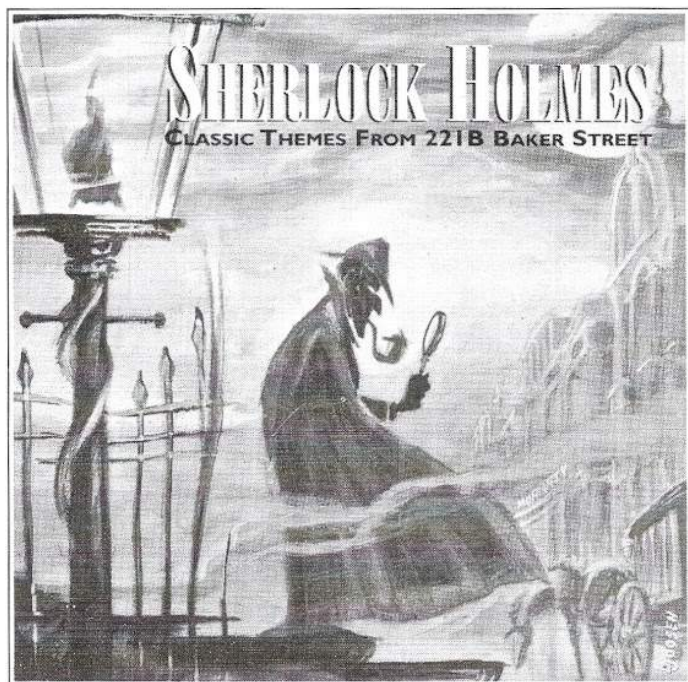


Christopher Atkins

Continued on page 8



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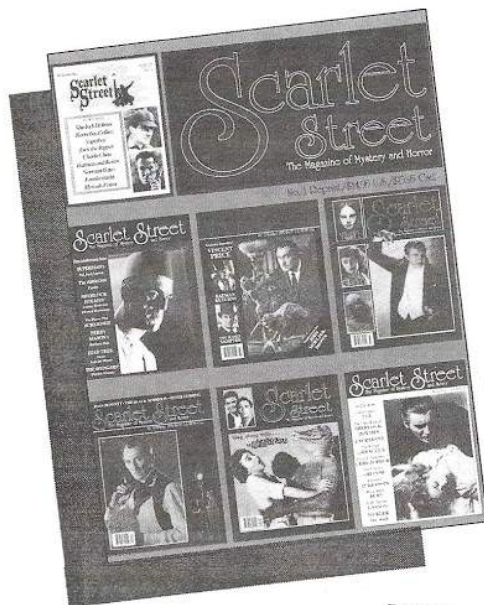


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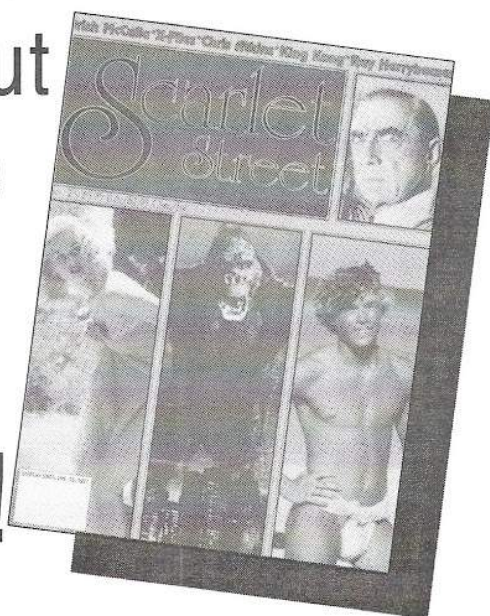
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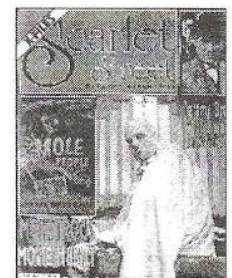
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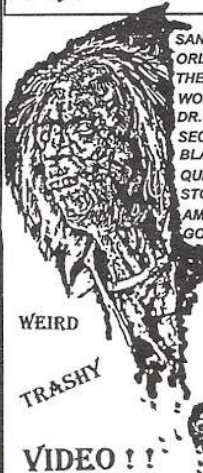


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## SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 4

Price, Coral Browne, George Macready, and Anne Baxter, who was I to criticize someone for exploiting her sister's corpse?

Concerning this Price/Macready business, I will not descend to making comments critical of Miss Baxter, an actress of whom I am very fond of and has sadly passed on. It would be inappropriate and unfair. However, I do criticize both Mr. Hadleigh and Mr. Valley for publishing some of her comments in the manner that they did. Allow me to clarify. "Young actors" told "a producer" who then told Miss Baxter who also gets her information from "some insiders." All this with no qualification from the writer or editor.

What "young actors?" What "producer?" Who were they? When was this? At what studio? Under what circumstances? I cannot believe that no one thought to ask. I apologize for now using words familiar to real historical researchers and archivists. But is there any documentation, corroboration, proof?

Scarlet Street writers will invariably rail against evil McCarthyite informers and vile censors. In fact, I know

that I will never see in SS a posthumous interview with Adolphe Menjou naming without proof or editorial comment an individual actor as being a paid communist agent. I know I will never see an article accusing Gore Vidal of child molestation based on the word of an unnamed informant. And I know that, if Miss Baxter went on a long antigay diatribe, that would never see print as well. And rightly so.

Yet how is ALL ABOUT ANNE any different? How is this not the same type of vicious gossip spewed out by a Hedda Hopper, a Louella Parsons, or a Kenneth Anger?

Mr. Valley, in my opinion there is a great difference between criticizing the Mona Lisa and dousing it with acid. You may disagree. I do not know. However, I am getting a queasy feeling that you would defame, deface, probably trample over anyone or thing if it would serve to promote The Agenda.

In all my life, I have never heard a bad word about Vincent Price. All reports indicated that he was a decent and kindly man. So, may I ask you a simple yes or no question? Putting aside the feelings of his friends, fans, and especially his family, do you

truly believe that you have done the name of Vincent Price a service this day?

James J. J. Janis  
Malverne, NY

Richard Valley replies: No, Mr. Janis, I don't. Nor do I think I've done the name of Vincent Price a disservice. You consider any hint of homosexuality a blot on a person's character, a defamation, a disfigurement—but that, sir, is entirely your problem. I doubt you will understand this, but it's possible to be a decent and kindly man and still be gay or bisexual. The Anne Baxter piece afforded Scarlet Street readers an opportunity to (in effect) sit and gossip with a Hollywood star. If the conversation was not to your liking, there was no one to keep you from moving on to another table.

Though Anne Baxter didn't say so, the story she repeated about Vincent Price and George Macready was one told often by David Lewis, a producer at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and the lover of genre director James Whale. The names of the young actors are lost to time, I'm afraid, but if any of them are willing to step forward we'd be happy to talk to them for Scarlet Street.

Continued on page 10



# Frankly Scarlet



She was one of my favorites when I was a kid and the local TV stations showed her colorful south sea island fantasies: *TYPHOON*, *HER JUNGLE LOVE*, *ALOMA OF THE SOUTH SEAS*, *THE JUNGLE PRINCESS*, *BEYOND THE BLUE HORIZON*, and *THE HURRICANE*. (All six are great good fun, but the last, directed by John Ford, is a genuine work of movie art.)

She introduced such popular '30s and '40s standards as "I Remember You," "Personality," "The Moon of Manakoora," "It Could Happen to You," and "Too Romantic."

And for 21 years, from 1940's *ROAD TO SINGAPORE* to 1961's *ROAD TO HONG KONG*, she was the self-described "slice of white bread between two slices of ham" in seven delicious road pictures with Der Bingle and Ol' Ski Nose. (The

eighth trip was in the works when Bing Crosby died in 1976.)

She was Dorothy Lamour, "The Queen of the Hollywood Islands," and we were putting the finishing touches on this jungle adventure edition of *Scarlet Street* when we learned of her death on Sunday, September 22, 1996.

Aloha . . .

\*\*\*

Our next issue won't be hitting the Road to Readers till late January, so



Dorothy Lamour

allow me to take this opportunity to send an early happy birthday wish to our very own Crimson Chronicler and the inspiration for all genre mags past, present, and future: Forrest J Ackerman. The Ackermmonster turns a youthful 80 on November 24th, but, from the busy schedule he keeps, you'd never know he was past 30! (Don't bring that birthday cake too close, though, or we won't be able to see the Forry for the candles!) Go-getter that he is, we're just happy that the one and only, original Mr. Filmonster finds time to write regularly for *Scarlet Street* in the midst of all those conventions, award ceremonies, and cross-country jaunts.

Make a wish, Uncle 4E . . .

\*\*\*

My space is once again severely limited, so let me close by simply saying that I hope you *Scarlet Street*ers have as much fun reading this issue of *The Magazine of Mystery and Horror* (and *Adventure*) as we had putting it together.

See you next time . . .

Richard  
Valley

It is, perhaps, nostalgia for that mysterious bygone era, so eloquently described by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, which has helped perpetrate the fascination with the world of Victorian crime in foggy, gaslit London. He takes the reader into a world before computers and forensic science, a world in which Sherlock Holmes stands head and shoulders above all other heroes of detective fiction.

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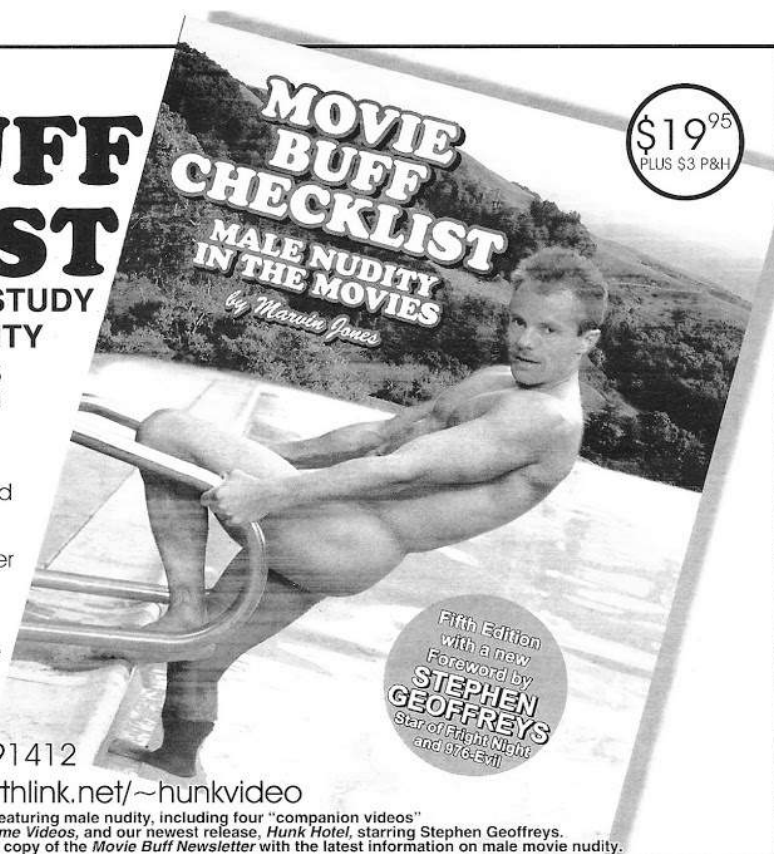
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## SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 8

*As for those things you know you will never see in Scarlet Street, Mr. Janis, I assure you that I'd be happy to consider a posthumous interview with Adolphe Menjou in which he names without proof an individual actor as being a paid communist agent. Until such time as one turns up, you can find the same thing in the official reports of the House Un-American Activities Committee.*

✉

I was really touched to read Dick Klemensen's remarks in issue #22 on the subject of *Scarlet Street*'s "gay agenda." For my own part, I've always thought the simple acknowledgment of Hollywood's substantial and largely closeted queer history and aesthetics can scarcely be said to constitute an "agenda." Klemensen (whose *Little Shoppe of Horrors* I've long admired) has a nice sense of the power realities that gays, lesbians, and bisexuals confront on a daily basis in this country; something the "pissers and moaners" seem to neglect when out trolling for "agendas."

Elsewhere in the LETTERS section, Linda Fresia manages to do a bit of moaning (as well as some highly unwarranted pissing) over my article

on the REAR WINDOW controversy. She "chides" me for referring to Cornell Woolrich as a "lonely, tortured, alcoholic homosexual," and seems to think it an unfair characterization. Indeed it is, but not for the reasons she may think. Aside from any problem she may have with my style (though, in fairness, anyone who uses a variation on the old "some of my best friends are gay" trope would seem blind to cliché), it is a lamentable historical fact that Woolrich (and millions of anonymous others) lived shadowed half-lives of shame and guilt due to this society's neurotic prejudice against their sexual preferences. Anyone even remotely familiar with Woolrich's life and times is fully aware of this truth. For the record, I am bisexual and have been politically active in a number of gay causes. Moreover, I rather doubt that the editor-in-chief of this magazine would permit gay-bashing or "tired stereotypes" (or even vigorous ones) in his pages. Agenda-spotting does seem a tricky business.

Ronald Dale Garmon  
Lodi, NJ

✉

Well, issue #22 was another first-rate edition of *Scarlet Street: The Magazine of Everything I Love!*

Words cannot properly convey my delight in finding Forrest J Ackerman in the now-glossy pages of my favorite magazine. Uncle Forry is a national treasure and *Scarlet Street*, a shining treasure in its own right, is the perfect setting for this rare jewel of a gentleman.

I only had the opportunity of meeting Mr. Ackerman (once self-dubbed the Poe man's Vincent Price) on a single memorable occasion, at a *Famous Monsters* gathering way back in the 1970s. I'll never forget the auction that was held as part of the festivities, and the determined young woman who bid for and won a precious hour of the Ackermanmonster's time for a mere \$100 or so.

Flash forward a couple of decades and who does that woman turn out to be but Lucy Chase Williams, recent author of the interesting *Films of Vincent Price!* It's a small world, I reckon, but thank God there's room for *Scarlet Street!*

Edward M. Steinmetz  
Tampa, FL

✉

Yo, *Scarlet Street*! What's the deal? SS #22 comes out of Canada, all slick pages and shorter than usual . . . and is this the Spring '96 or Summer '96 issue? If, by any chance, this



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lowers your cost per issue, forget I brought all this up.

The mag does look terrific. I especially enjoyed the LAURA and Anne Baxter pieces. Thought the DR. PHIBES piece should have been much longer, especially considering the cover.

I also very much enjoyed the Baker Street CD [See page 24; Ed.], which I picked up the day I received the new *Scarlet Street*. Yes, a long overdue CD. Although some themes weren't as vivid as in their original, old mono form, it was a noble effort . . . and even the liner notes were good. Thanks for all your efforts in the mystery/horror genre.

Bill Shaffer

zzshaf@ktwu.wuacc.edu

Yo, Bill! Don't think of the new *Scarlet Street* as shorter than usual; think of the previous editions as having lots of bonus pages! Seriously, we feel we're giving our readers their money's worth. We've even managed to hold steady at our current price through all the horrors of the recent Paper Price Wars. Due to an extended search for a printer capable of taking us glowingly into a glossier future, we were forced to cut back this year and have only produced three absolutely superlative issues. (Subscribers

*will still receive their four issues, of course.) However, we'll be right back on schedule in January, so fear not . . . the beast is yet to come!*

✉

Just wanted to drop a note and let you know how much I appreciate the great work you're doing with *Scarlet Street*. I'm very impressed with the evolution of your magazine over the past couple of years; I especially love all the information that you manage to jam into each issue, while also giving us high-quality articles about some of my favorite films.

I really loved the comparison of THE HAUNTING with THE INNOCENTS (SS #20). While I have seen the former several times (and still get chills), I haven't seen the latter for many years. Lelia Loban's article has definitely convinced me to give another look (particularly since I found her views on THE HAUNTING so insightful and revealing). I only wish that Lelia could have expanded her article slightly to include one of my all-time favorite ghost films, THE UNINVITED—a picture with more than a passing nod to psycho-sexual/supernatural overtones in the subtly played lesbian subplot (that's never really explored)

in the relationship between Mrs. Holloway and Mary Meredith.

I also enjoyed the interview with Russ Tamblyn, laser reviews, and the update on Roger Corman's newest projects. And the overview of Val Lewton's career has also given me the desire to pick up that new laser collection and renew my love affair with the man's sensitive and disturbing portrayals of light and shadow.

I especially want to add something to the RECORD RACK column by Ross Care, regarding the Marco Polo reconstructions by Bill Stromberg and John Morgan. *Scarlet Street* readers should be aware of the fact that, not only are these two gentlemen extraordinarily adept at reorchestrating some of our favorite film soundtracks from the past (down to the tiniest detail!), but they are wonderful feature film composers in their own right! In my work as a picture, sound, and music editor, I have had the privilege of personally laying down many of their tracks over the past several years, and their dynamic scores have added immeasurably to the films we have done together. These films include the recent sci-fi offering MUTANT SPECIES (aka BIO-FORCE); Pamela (BAYWATCH)



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He's been named in an international 1996 poll as the All-Time Favorite American Movie Star, and here you can test your knowledge of the screen icon with more than 500 questions—and, of course, answers—about John Wayne.

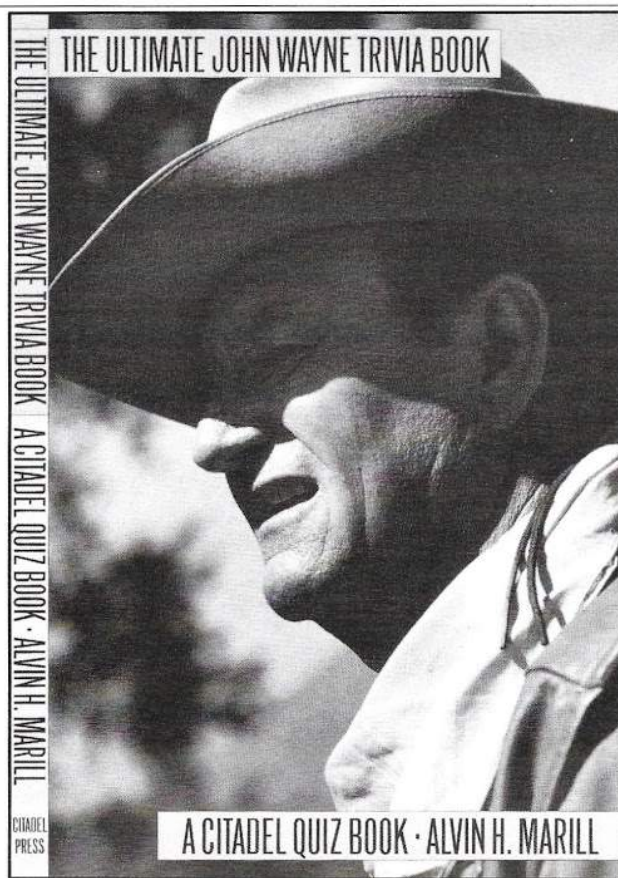
- In what film did he kiss Walter Brennan?
- In barroom style brawls, he slugged it out with Randolph Scott in what two movies?
- He put what two leading ladies over his knee for good spankings in two consecutive movies. Name the films and the recipients of his open palm.
- True or false: On the screen, Wayne fought in every American war.
- Name the only Wayne movie which was made into a Broadway musical.
- Duke dueted with his leading lady in Gilbert and Sullivan in what film?

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Anderson's first feature, *RAW JUSTICE*; and a strange, almost semi-musical murder mystery, *DEADLY DANCER*. I'm not sure who gets credit for which cues, but I urge all soundtrack lovers to track these pictures down.

Tony "Skip" Malanowski  
Sun Valley, CA

*Surely you know by now, Skip, that Scarlet Street leaves no stone unturned—or, as Rod Taylor put it in THE BIRDS, no tern unstoned. THE UNINVITED was deftly covered by Michael Brunas in SS #12, complete with an exclusive Ruth Hussey interview.*

✉

Having just devoured a number of back issues and undertaken a current subscription, I thought it was high time to let you know of my appreciation for your informative and entertaining publication.

I particularly enjoyed the stories on *KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER*, Johnny Sheffield, *VILLAGE OF THE DAMNED*, Beverly Garland, and *SHERLOCK HOLMES*.

However, to my surprise and partial dismay, there has been very little mention of that great Warner Bros. Fat Man, Sydney Greenstreet. Much has been said of *THE MALTESE FALCON*, but I believe he gave his best screen performance in the

1946 release *THE VERDICT* (not to be confused with the Paul Newman production). Unfairly dismissed as a "feeble melodrama" (according to Clive Hirschhorn in 1979's *The Warner Brothers Story*), the picture is actually a well-paced mystery set in 1892 London.

Greenstreet was often paired with that little villain, Peter Lorre, in films such as *THREE STRANGERS* (also 1946), but he returned solo in 1948's *THE WOMAN IN WHITE*.

I would dearly love to see a feature article on this refined character actor who graced the screen for a brief nine years, dying in 1954 at age 74. Maybe one of your expert writers may wish to fulfill my request.

Carmelo Bazzano  
Victoria, Australia

*Since THE VERDICT is one of Ye Reditor's very favorite Greenstreet/Lorre teamings, you may rest assured that it will rear its foggy head in a future issue of Scarlet Street. And ditto for THREE STRANGERS.*

✉

I have heard of your magazine before. I think I first saw it at a *DARK SHADOWS* convention in 1993. However, I thought (erroneously) that, since you're "just a horror film magazine," I wouldn't be interested. I'm not much of a horror movie fan,

though I have some interest (mild) in Karloff, Lugosi, Lee, et al.

What changed my mind was your Issue #20. I was with my family in Massachusetts during the holidays and my best friend took me to a great store in Dartmouth that sells magazines and journals from all different fields. Since I'm interested in SF/fantasy and some mystery, I naturally went to that section. I was surprised to see *Scarlet Street*. What made me pick it up right away, though, was Jeremy Brett on your cover. Not only am I a huge Sherlock Holmes fan, but I adore Jeremy Brett. His death upset me greatly.

When I got home, I was delighted with the rest of the contents as well. You surprised me. Sure, there were items that I didn't take to, but I read a good deal of the issue and loved it. I was impressed by two things, especially. One; in your letters column, the debate about your supposed "progay" coverage in past issues, and your very enlightened defense. You refused to back down to the homophobes. I'm not gay, but I'm very much a feminist (and highly political), and the homoerotic content of horror has always been clear to me. Two; your very absorbing, in-depth analysis of the storyline and characters of those two classic hor-



ror films, *THE INNOCENTS* and *THE HAUNTING*, neither of which I've seen. Now you have me highly intrigued about these films!

Unlike other movie magazines, you focus on the story, the content, not the superficial aspects like the special effects. Even before I got to the Brett interview, you had me hooked! You even had me reading the interviews with Deborah Kerr, David Wayne, the child actor from *THE INNOCENTS*, even that B-movie actress. I was especially interested in the interviews with Kerr and Russ Tamblyn (an actor I remember well and was always curious about). The Shirley Jackson piece was an eye-opener! I'd never even heard of her! Now I want to go out and buy her works to read!

As for the Brett interview, thank goodness it's long and a great read! Going through the issue, I was also excited to see a reference to a film no one seems to remember, and that's almost never shown on TV anymore: *A STUDY IN TERROR*. I would kill to have a copy of it!

I look forward to reading more of your magazine.

Sandra Necchi  
Brooklyn, NY

No need to commit murder, *Sandra*. *A STUDY IN TERROR* is available from *Scarlet Street Video*. Just check the ad on pages 32-33!

For the past 10 years, the Film Forum Cinema in New York City has held a festival of fantasy, horror, and sci-fi each August. They have shown Hammer and Universal classics, Val Lewton films, Price/Poe films, sci-fi films from the '50s and '60s, and just about everything else you can imagine, including *PLANET OF THE APES* two years ago with Kim Hunter in attendance.

The festival has always done very well. In the past week, screenings of *FORBIDDEN PLANET*, *FANTASTIC VOYAGE*, and *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL* (shown with Emergo, the old William Castle gimmick) were all sellouts. Yet Film Forum has just announced that this year's festival will be the last! I guess money doesn't always talk.

Please urge your readers to write to Film Forum and ask them to continue this wonderful tradition. Letters should come from the tri-state New York City area. Thank you.

Paul Sanchez  
New York, NY

Consider our readers urged, *Paul*. Send those letters to Karen Cooper, Director, Film Forum, 209 West Houston Street, New York, New York, 10014.

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Hugh Mills  
Chillicothe, Ohio

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# the NEWS HOUND

The Mysterious Media Mongrel returns with news of a fearsome fall and a windswept winter to bring on the willies . . .

## Theatrical Thrills

Moviegoing tricksters can treat themselves this Halloween to STEPHEN KING'S THINNER (Paramount), director Eric (BODY PARTS) Red's werewolf thriller BAD MOON (Warner Bros.), and the Universal reissue of the newly-restored Hitchcock classic VERTIGO—in a 70mm Super VistaVision limited release to theaters in New York, Washington, D.C., Toronto, Los Angeles, and, of course, San Francisco . . . Dutch director Ole Bornedal's stateside remake of his suspense thriller NIGHTWATCH (Dimension) opens in November, as does the low-profile Paramount release STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT. But even the Borg are no match for the animated alien attackers in Tim Burton's MARS ATTACKS! (Warner Bros.), eager to vaporize audiences this December. Also in December: director Wes Craven mixes ELM STREET with CLUELESS and gets HEADLESS—actually, it's called SCREAM and it stars Drew Barrymore, Courteney Cox and Neve Campbell as somewhat mature high-schoolers who battle a killer. The Hound likes his title better.

"ALIEN in a museum" is how January release THE RELIC has been described. Pretty grad student Penelope Ann Miller (THE SHADOW's Margo Lane) is menaced by the legendary Kothoga (don't ask us) in this Paramount thriller from director Peter Hyams. In February, watch for David Lynch's bizarre (naturally) murder mystery LOST HIGHWAY (October Films), starring Bill Pullman and Patricia Arquette. Also arriving in February is George Lu-

cas' 20th-anniversary reissue of a souped-up STAR WARS: THE SPECIAL EDITION (Fox). As ol' Yoda would say, "Feeling old, you are." Following close behind are effects-enhanced reissues of THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (in March) and RETURN OF THE JEDI (May). Some other flicks due in early 1997: LOCHNESS (PolyGram) starring Ted Danson and Ian Holm; THE SAINT (Paramount) starring Val Kilmer and Elizabeth Shue; and AN AMERICAN

CLARK, Teri Hatcher and Dean Cain, may star. Producer Peters is looking to add a little grit to the franchise, as he did to BATMAN thanks to Tim Burton's direction and Michael Keaton's portrayal of a balding Caped Crusader.

More movies from Warner Bros. based on DC Comics characters: PLASTIC MAN from Australian director Geoffrey Wright; Basketball titan Shaquille O'Neal as STEEL, produced by Kenneth Johnson of

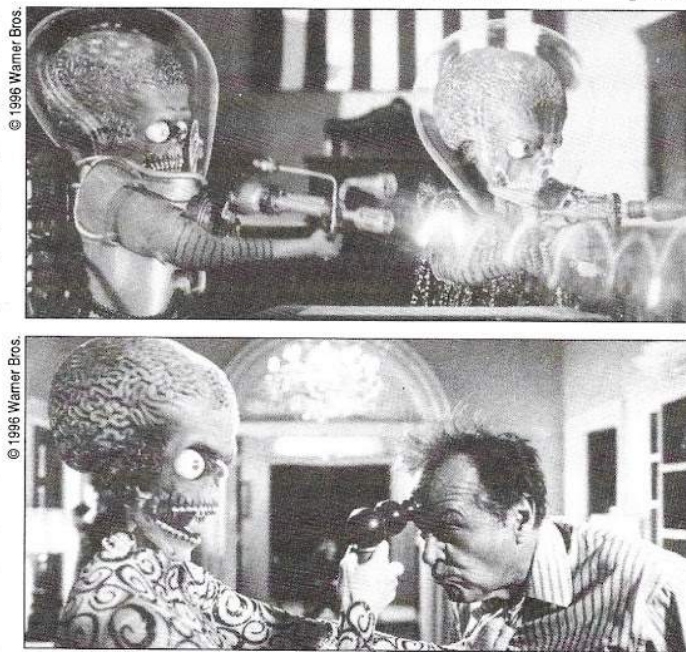
TV's ALIEN NATION; and next summer's BATMAN AND ROBIN starring George Clooney and Chris O'Donnell as the Dynamic Duo. Joining them in Gotham City are Alicia Silverstone as Batgirl, Arnold Schwarzenegger as Mr. Freeze, supermodel Vendela as Mrs. Freeze, Elle Macpherson as Bruce Wayne's squeeze, John Glover as mad scientist Dr. Jason Woodrue, and Uma Thurman, who's tentatively cast as bad, bodacious botanist Poison Ivy.

## Baked Goods

Scarlet Street's own actor/director/writer/interviewer Kevin G. Shinnick has a tasty treat in store for New Yorkers this January: he'll be directing a brand new revival of the sparkling stage farce A PIECE OF CAKE. Scream Queen Debi Rochon is said

to be eyeing the role of a curvy (what else?) acting student who falls into the greedy mits of a fading horror-movie star and his jealous wife. (Picture Vincent Price and Coral Browne.) Lots of laughs, lots of female nudity, lots of male nudity (didn't I tell you that winter would bring you the willies?), and here's a scoop: the play's author is none other than that hard-hitting Scarlet Street Reditor, Richard Valley. For information, call (201) 865-0673.

Continued on page 18



Adapted from the play, from the novel—and now, adapted from the bubble gum cards! MARS ATTACKS! Jack Nicholson in the new Tim Burton film.

WEREWOLF IN PARIS (Hollywood Pictures) starring Julie Delpy and Tom Everett Scott.

## It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's a Sequel

After a 10-year absence, The Man of Steel will leap back onto cinema screens in SUPERMAN REBORN from producer Jon Peters. Kevin Smith, director of slacker epics CLERKS and MALLRATS, has inexplicably been given the assignment of writing the new Warner Bros. feature. Casting has yet to begin, but rumors abound that TV's LOIS AND



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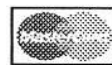
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# Night Stalker News

by Drew Sullivan

Some of the bigger dreams haven't come true. Darren McGavin refuses to take part in Dan Curtis' proposed RETURN OF THE NIGHT STALKER, a story that would once again pit Carl Kolchak, reporter, against Janos Skorzeny, vampire. ("I won't work with Dan Curtis," McGavin bluntly told *Scarlet Street* in a 1994 interview.) Nor will Kolchak be turning up as a special guest character on THE X-FILES. (In a 1996 *New York Post* interview, McGavin said that THE X-FILES had stolen the concept of KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER, but that they couldn't steal him.)

Still, there's good news. For the first time in almost 25 years, four episodes of KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER will be available in their original format. Beginning this October, Columbia House (1-800-262-2001) is going to release all 20 episodes of the series on video via mail order, including "Fire Fall," "The Energy Eater," "Demon in Lace," and "Legacy of Terror," the four shows that were recut (mangled is a better word) and turned into two TV movies, CRACKLE OF DEATH and DEMON AND THE MUMMY. The episodes will be followed by the Columbia House release of both original TV movies, THE NIGHT STALKER and THE NIGHT STRANGLER (the latter with footage restored).

Meanwhile, Fox Video has already rereleased THE NIGHT STALKER on video, and, by the time you read this, it should also be out on laserdisc.

There's also a fun and informative new Kolchak newsletter called "... it couldn't happen here," edited by Mark Schulz. You can write Mark at P.O. Box



Darren McGavin as Carl Kolchak

4000, Center Line, Michigan 48015-4000 or e-mail him at GodzillaMS@aol.com.

We'll have more info next issue.



NBC Photo: Paul Drinkwater



DARK SKIES

## NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 16

### Doing It By the Book

Russell Wong, the Chinese-American actor who stars in the VANISHING SON teleseries, has signed a three-picture deal with Miramax to star as author Earl Derr Biggers' immortal detective Charlie Chan. This will be the first time an Asian actor will portray the role since E. L. Park briefly played Chan in the 1929 whodunit BEHIND THAT CURTAIN. The new films will take place in the present day; let's hope they keep the kickboxing to a minimum.

Stephen King's short story "The Night Flyer," from the 1988 *Prime Evil* collection, is being expanded into a feature film by the producers of this season's THINNER, Richard Rubinstein and Mitchell Galin. "Apt Pupil," one of the four novellas comprising King's 1982 *Different Seasons*, is also in development as a Paramount feature. Bryan Singer (THE USUAL SUSPECTS) is slated for the director's chair.

Other upcoming movies based on books: Aphrodite Jones' genderbending true-crime story *All She Wanted* starring Drew Barrymore, Karen Hall's adaptation for Paramount of her supernatural bestseller *Dark Debts*, and John Burdett's Hong Kong-set mystery thriller *The Last Six Million Seconds*, which Jan De Bont (TWISTER) will produce and direct for 20th Century Fox.

Ever since JURASSIC PARK made a zillion dollars for Universal, producers are jumping all over pop novelist Michael Crichton's other works. Next up will be Universal's sequel THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK, now in production with Jeff Goldblum and Julianne Moore in the lead roles; it's scheduled for a March release. Also currently rolling is SPHERE, a Warner Bros. feature based on Crichton's 1987 novel about the undersea discovery of a 300-year-old spacecraft encased within the large title object. Also, DIE HARD director John McTiernan may direct

Continued on page 20



## THE X-FILES

Fox Video

Two sides each; CLV

\$29.98 per disc

Disc One: "Pilot" / "Deep Throat"

Disc Two: "Conduit" / "Ice"

Disc Three: "Fallen Angel" / "Eve"

Some popular TV series have taken months, or even years, to hit their stride (e.g. STAR TREK's many incarnations). Some popular (popular in retrospect, that is) TV series never hit their stride at all (e.g. KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER, which was canceled after one measly season). THE X-FILES, however, hit the ground running when it debuted in the Fall of 1993. Its first two episodes are among the very best, and they have been smartly and conveniently paired as the lead-off laser release from Fox Video. Two other discs are also available, and more will already be in the stores by the time you hold this issue in your hands.

The pilot episode and "Deep Throat" were both written by series creator Chris Carter; together they're a perfect introduction to the characters, background story, and stylistic combination of suspense, humor, and creeping paranoia that propelled this former cult favorite

into the multiple award-winning mainstream hit it has become.

For the uninitiated (and, perhaps, for those recent returnees to planet Earth), THE X-FILES chronicles fictional (?) unsolved F.B.I. cases involving unexplained phenomena, and the "x-ploits" of the two agents who investigate them: inveterate skeptic Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) and true believer Fox Mulder (David Duchovny). X-FILES episodes fall into two broad categories: the "monster of the week" (producer Carter is a big fan of KOLCHAK) and shows that explore UFOs, alien visitations, and the conspiracy by a shadowy governmental group to hide knowledge of it all. The three laserdiscs now in release present six good examples of both kinds of shows:

In the pilot episode, the newly-partnered Mulder and Scully investigate the mysterious deaths of several Oregon teenagers; in "Deep Throat," Mulder is introduced to the mysterious title character—a highly-placed informant who advises the agents to drop their current case: the disappearance of a test pilot near an ultra-secret Air Force base.

FBI agents Dana Scully and Fox Mulder (Gillian Anderson and David Duchovny) are once again on the trail of the paranormal in THE X-FILES, and this time the trail has led to laserdisc!



# INSIDE THE X FILES™

"Conduit" concerns an Idaho trailer-park resident who believes her teenage daughter was abducted by aliens, and whose young son is receiving messages from television static; Mulder, Scully and a team of scientists become trapped in an Arctic research station with an ancient parasite in "Ice," a suspenseful entry chillingly inspired by THE THING (1951).

"Fallen Angel" is a standout episode involving the military cover-up of a crashed UFO in Wisconsin; in "Eve," two strikingly similar deaths, occurring many thousands of miles apart, are linked to a decades-old cloning experiment.

Picture quality and stereo sound are excellent on these discs. Each side contains one 45-minute episode, bookmarked by at least 10 chapter stops. I've got a couple of minor complaints, though: Fox Video has chosen, with the exception of the first disc, to release the episodes out of order from their original airing. It seems that Fox is less interested in pleasing purist collectors than in reserving the option to do some creative programming—pairing a "monster" show with an "alien" show. (Among the new trio of releases in September, however, will be a fitting combo of the two exceptional episodes featuring Doug Hutchison as mutant villain Eugene Victor Toombs.)

One other nit to pick: each episode is preceded with a brief introduction by creator Chris Carter. These segments are informative and nicely produced, but Carter's comments (and the video clips that illustrate them) spoil most of the surprises of the episode to come. For spoiler-free viewing, I recommend programming your player to run these segments after the episode and not before.

by John J. Mathews



## NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 18

EATERS OF THE DEAD for Disney, with a screenplay based on the Crichton tale of an unseen entity that attacks a savage band of 10th Century Vikings. The frightening force is eventually kept at bay by the strains of the Viking's rousing songs about Spam. Or are we thinking of a Monty Python movie?

### Updates Aplenty

It looks like a fourth Indiana Jones adventure from Paramount is closer to being a sure thing. Kate Capshaw (Mrs. Steven Spielberg) has confirmed in the press that the project is in the works. Although it's still anyone's guess when it will happen, both Sean Connery and Harrison Ford are said to be game to repeat their roles as the Professors Jones, *pere et fils* . . . Fox's summer '97 release ALIEN RESURRECTION picks up 200 years after the merry events of ALIEN3. Sigourney Weaver portrays a genetic clone of her original Ripley character, whose DNA has been mixed with that of an alien (and vice versa!). Along for the latest bug hunt is Wynona Ryder as a hard-boiled cyborg agent. Guess she got tired of all those costume dramas . . . Fox will also resurrect Anne Rice's *The Mummy* as a film project for producer James Cameron, whose neo-disaster movie TITANIC is now in production . . . Director William Friedkin's planned New Line production THE DIARY OF JACK THE RIPPER seems to have dropped the first three words from its title, as well as Anthony Hopkins from its cast roster . . . It appears that Wes Craven and Miramax have abandoned their proposed remake of THE HAUNTING. Guess we'll have to settle for the spine-tingling 1963 original . . . Despite rumors of Nicole Kidman and Sean Bean being cast as Emma Peel and John Steed, Warner Bros.' feature version of THE AVENGERS seems to be lost in limbo inside "The House That Jack Built." Perhaps a "Quick-Quick Slow Death" is just what this production needed.

### It Came From Outer Your Television

The Space Family Robinson is scheduled to be LOST IN SPACE yet again, in a big-screen New Line Cinema release that's due to start shooting in February. Stephen Hopkins, director of PREDATOR 2, ELM STREET 5, and the recent African adventure

Continued on page 22

## 30 Years in the Dungeon by Bob Madison

When Cortlandt Hull started making his faithful recreations of the classic movie monsters of yesteryear, he had no idea that he would still be doing it 30 Halloweens later.

But he is . . .

Hull's Witch's Dungeon, the only museum to display life-sized recreations of our all-time favorite fiends, will again open for three weekends this Halloween season. What began merely as a hobby for the talented Mr. Hull (and yes, he's related to the late Henry Hull of WEREWOLF OF LONDON fame) has become an East Coast Halloween tradition, with fans flocking from around the country annually to see the great movie monsters brought back to "life." Located in the quiet suburban town of Bristol, Connecticut, the Dungeon will now let loose such creatures as Frankenstein's Monster, Count Dracula, Dr. Anton Phibes, and the Wolf Man for the 30th year in a row.

This Season of the Witch, the Dungeon will admit the brave and bold among us on October 18-20, October 25-27, and October 31-November 3. And admission is still only a mere 50 cents!

Like many Scarlet Streeters, Hull (a professional painter, sculptor, and makeup artist) first became obsessed with monsters when he was a little boy. "Lots of my friends were afraid of them," he recalls. "But I always saw that they were victims more than anything else. Most times, terrible things were done to monsters by people, and not the other way around. To me, they were very real friends."

Hull created the Dungeon when he was only 13 years old, starting with just a few figures. "I was always interested in the arts. And in monsters, too. However, I never dreamed I'd merge these two passion together!"

Many of the figures in the museum, such as Bela Lugosi's Dracu-



**It's The Three Faces of Karloff:** the Frankenstein Monster as recreated by Cortlandt Hull for the Witch's Dungeon, Karloff daughter Sara as created in part by Boris himself, and a life mask of the one and only King of Horror!

la, are sculpted from actual life masks of the actors' face. Both the Creature from the Black Lagoon and the Mole Man were cast from original studio molds of the movie masks, then recast and painted by Hull. The late Vincent Price donated the costume he wore in his first horror hit, HOUSE OF WAX (1953), and it can now be seen on the museum's Price figure.

And that's not all. Price, a longtime friend of Hull, recorded the voiceover narration for visitors to the Dungeon. Other celebrity voices include Mark Hamill, John Agar, and June Foray.

Last year, Sara Karloff, daughter of Boris Karloff, moviedom's greatest Frankenstein Monster, popped over for a visit. Looking at Hull's recreation of the Monster, Ms. Karloff smiled, nodded, and said, "That's Daddy!" She will return this season to greet Dungeon visitors.

The Witch's Dungeon is located at 90 Battle Street in Bristol, Connecticut. The exhibit opens at sundown (naturally) and is not recommended for children under six. For directions, visitors can send a self-addressed, stamped postcard to The Witch's Dungeon, 90 Battle Street, Bristol, CT 06010.





**They're New! New! New!** Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke return as Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson in the final six episodes of the classic Granada series:

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## NEWS HOUND

*Continued from page 20*

THE GHOST AND THE DARKNESS, will helm the film, and Akiva Goldsman (BATMAN AND ROBIN) will write the screenplay. Look for it in late '97 or early '98 . . . Nicole Kidman may be vying for yet another role in a '60s TV update: suburban house-witch Samantha Stevens in Penny Marshall's BEWITCHED . . . INDEPENDENCE DAY's Dean Devlin is scripting a live-action version of the popular cartoon series GARGOYLES . . . Other TV series which may be hitting the big screen include BATTLESTAR GALACTICA, MAGNUM P.I. (rumored to be scripted by novelist Tom Clancy) and HAWAII FIVE-O from frequent Brian DePalma producing partner George Litto. Be there. Aloha.

### If It Ain't Broke Dept. Revisited

Peter Jackson and Frances Walsh, the director-producer team of THE FRIGHTENERS and HEAVENLY CREATURES, will remake KING KONG for Universal. At least this talented team will set their version back in the 1930s, unlike the "modernized" 1976 Paramount debacle. Kate Winslet (SENSE AND SENSIBILITY) is being courted for the Fay Wray role . . . Lucas Foster, producer of the submarine actioner CRIMSON TIDE, will produce a new version of THE TIME MACHINE for Columbia . . . The 1967 original nearly bankrupted Fox—now Eddie Murphy wants to try his hand with a remake of the notorious DOCTOR DOLITTLE. (Songs will include "If I Could Talk To The #!%\$#@ Animals.") Perhaps Murphy should next update PEPE and play the Cantinflas role.

### Television Terrors

THE X-FILES has infiltrated neighboring airwaves more craftily than any alien invasion that Fox Mulder could imagine. In addition to XF creator Chris Carter's new creepfest MILLENNIUM, debuting on the Fox network on October 25, other networks are jumping on the paranormal bandwagon. This fall, NBC has devoted all of Saturday night to new shows with an eerie edge: DARK SKIES depicts the government's secret war with aliens, and how four decades of historic disasters have all been the fault of pesky ETs; THE PRETENDER is a cross between QUANTUM LEAP and THE FUGITIVE that concerns a laboratory-raised genius who escapes a se-

cret institute; and PROFILER, a SILENCE OF THE LAMBS clone about a beautiful, brilliant FBI forensic psychologist who's hunting her serial-killer nemesis. NBC will also air a telefilm this season called THE TRAVELER in which a young Army officer discovers evidence of a UFO crash in the Pacific Northwest. Even THE SIMPSONS gets in the X-FILES mood this fall with an animated appearance of Gillian Anderson and David Duchovny as Scully and Mulder (Leonard Nimoy is also on hand as . . . well, who knows?) And worldwide superstar David Hasselhoff has reworked his surf 'n' silicone spinoff BAYWATCH NIGHTS into a "spooky, creature-of-the-week drama." Sort of like Kolchak with cleavage.



What's Halloween without a witch's tale? Winona Ryder and Daniel Day-Lewis provide it in the film version of Arthur Miller's THE CRUCIBLE.

David Suchet returns as POIROT this season in two new two-part dramas: "Dumb Witness" and "Poirot's Christmas." They'll run between Halloween and Thanksgiving on WGBH's MYSTERY! series on PBS. Five more POIROT encore episodes will follow . . . DCI Jane Tennison is back on the job as MASTERPIECE THEATRE presents Helen Mirren in another telefeature PRIME SUSPECT: INNER CIRCLES. Expect it December 29th.

The Sci-Fi Channel will present three new literary adaptations—John Wyndham's DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS, Aldous Huxley's BRAVE NEW WORLD and Jules Verne's JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH . . . The potato-pated Newcomers return in Fox's ALIEN NATION: THE UDARA LEGACY . . . Cable's TNT will present THE HUNCHBACK, with Mandy Patinkin as Quasimodo.

The good news: MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000 will return with 13 new episodes on The Sci-Fi

Channel this February. The bad news: Trace Beaulieu, who portrays Dr. Clayton Forrester and Crow T. Robot, has left the show. The remaining hecklers will lambaste flicks in Sci-Fi's library like 1963's DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS. Also coming to Sci-Fi this season are reruns of EARTH 2, M.A.N.T.I.S., and seaQuest DSV . . . Plans to turn the stylish telefilm DOCTOR WHO into a weekly series have been buried by Fox. Also canned by the network: STRANGE LUCK and SPACE: ABOVE AND BEYOND. And yet, MARRIED WITH CHILDREN remains. Science fiction indeed!

### Computer Kicks and Internet Intrigue

David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson will star on CD-ROM in an X-FILES computer game available from Fox Interactive next year. Players can become a main character and collaborate with Mulder and Scully . . . The Sci-Fi Channel Trivia Game features nearly 5,000 questions and a morphing, toothsome quizmaster. It's available on CD-ROM and can be previewed on the Sci-Fi Channel's website (<http://www.scifi.com>) . . . "The Cabinet of Dr. Casey" is a great horror fan site. It includes a movie poster archive and a wonderfully comprehensive, searchable horror database (<http://www.cat.pdx.edu/~caseyh/horror/index.html>)

. . . Public Media's Tardis TV archive includes (among other gems) a great episode guide to KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER. It and tons of other sites can be reached through "TV Net" (<http://www.tvnet.com>) . . . "The Daktari Stool" is a MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER virtual episode guide which features great graphics and frame grabs from just about every episode. A labor of love and a wonder to behold (<http://members.aol.com/Torgo911/private/index.htm>) . . . Forrest J Ackerman lurks in cyberspace, as well as in the pages of *Scarlet Street*. Peruse his twice-monthly column for The Sci-Fi Channel (<http://www.scifi.com/pulp/4SJ/>), and then take a virtual tour of the Ackermansion from "4E's Foyer" (<http://www.best.com/~4forry/foyer.shtml>).

### The Home Video Vault

Already lying in wait in your video shop are MCA's latest in the Universal Horror Classics series: CURSE OF



THE UNDEAD, THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD, THE CLIMAX, and THE STRANGE DOOR. The latter two are also paired as a laserdisc double feature for \$69.98; on tape they're \$14.98 each. MCA will also debut a pair of film noir classics: THE BIG CLOCK starring Ray Milland, and PORTRAIT IN BLACK with Lana Turner. They're \$14.98 each, too... Paramount Home Video is celebrating Halloween with new low prices on PET SEMATARY 2 and HELLRAISER III (\$14.98 each), and a Stephen King gift set of SILVER BULLET and THE DEAD ZONE (\$29.90). Fox has jumped on the beastly bandwagon by repricing THE OMEN, THE FURY and *Scarlet Street* fave THE NIGHT STALKER starring Darren McGavin. Each is available at \$9.95 for a limited time.

Fox also has three new X-FILES videos available; each contains two episodes from the show's first season. One of the tapes contains the pair of episodes featuring slimy villain Eugene Victor Tooms (Scarlet interviewee Doug Hutchison)... Recent titles ripe for rental include the BMG thriller ONE GOOD TURN featuring an explosive cameo by Forry Ackerman, the creepy RUMPELSTILTSKIN from Republic, HALLOWEEN: THE CURSE OF MICHAEL MYERS (Dimension) with Donald Pleasence in his final role, and a pair of Troma treats: CANNIBAL: THE MUSICAL and Fred Olen Ray's WIZARDS OF THE DEMON SWORD featuring the ever-game Russ Tamblyn.



The Zuni fetish doll returns in the USA film TRILOGY OF TERROR II.

In October, Fox Video is finally releasing the ghostly 1963 classic THE INNOCENTS starring Deborah Kerr (nicely chronicled in *Scarlet Street* #20). Also available from Fox in October is the stylish Italian horror film CEMETARY MAN, directed by Dario Argento disciple Michele Soavi. Other October releases: MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000: THE MOVIE (not for fans of THIS ISLAND EARTH), available for rental from MCA (and on letterboxed laserdisc for \$34.98); the windy megahit TWISTER (Warner Home Video,

\$22.96); and the sorority sorceress flick THE CRAFT (Columbia TriStar, priced for rental)... FUNNYMAN (Arrow Video) features a new villain who's Britain's answer to Freddy Krueger, and a supporting turn by the one and only Christopher Lee... The deceptively-titled PINOCCHIO'S REVENGE (Vidmark) is an effective chiller from WITCHBOARD director Kevin Tenney... Snap your fingers! THE ADDAMS FAMILY and ADDAMS FAMILY VALUES are available in a gift set from Paramount for \$29.90. Thank you, Thing!

In November, this year's hit feature MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE comes to video from Paramount—entirely possible to purchase at \$19.95 or less (should you choose to accept it). Laser collectors will be gnashing their teeth over MCA/Universal's November release of a special edition of JAWS. Weighing in at a hefty \$129.98, the package includes a brand-new two-hour documentary with behind-the-scenes footage and new interviews with the cast and crew. Also included are outtakes, deleted scenes, and home movies shot during production by director Steven Spielberg.

#### Fearsome Flotsam

Warner Bros. Records has released THE TRUTH AND THE LIGHT: MORE MUSIC FROM THE X-FILES. Unlike the first CD, SONGS IN THE KEY OF X, this one exclusively features Mark Snow's eerie composi-

*Continued on page 98*

# The King is back !!

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# He Plays the Violin Sherlock on CD

by Tom Amorosi and Richard Valley

*I think about the Baron  
Who came at my command  
And proffered me a riding crop and chains  
The evening that we shared  
Was meticulously planned  
He took the most extraordinary pains*

—Stephen Sondheim

For those who find pleasure in pleasure—listening pleasure, to be specific—and not in spiked leather goods, there's good news afoot! Sherlock Holmes is back! Not only that: Professor James Moriarty is at it again, too! Musically speaking, the Napoleon of Crime slinks malevolently through the haunting melodies and rousing adventure themes of a delightful new CD from Varèse Sarabande, titled **SHERLOCK HOLMES: CLASSIC THEMES FROM 221B BAKER STREET**.

The recent release, produced by Bruce Kimmel, conducted by Lanny Meyers, and with liner notes by *Scarlet Street's* own editor-in-chief, Richard Valley, is not a collection of original soundtracks, but rather a "concept album" of music adapted from Sherlock Holmes movies. As Kimmel explains it, "Really, I planned it as an adventure, a Sherlockian adventure in album form. That was the concept right from the get-go."

A vital component of that concept includes the "ancient Incan funeral dirge" used by Moriarty as a murder device in **THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES** (1939), the second of the classic Holmes mysteries starring Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce. The theme makes three dark and brooding appearances on the album, under the titles "Moriarty—Genius of Evil," "Moriarty—The Game is Afoot," and "Moriarty—Elementary," then turns the stage over to another dire menace from the world of the World's Greatest Detective: the Hound of the Baskervilles!

Getting the project into the recording studio wasn't exactly a three-pipe problem, according to Kimmel. "I was sitting with Chris Kushler, who owns Varèse Sarabande. I was talking about *Scarlet Street* and saying, 'It's a really good magazine. Does a lot of Sherlock Holmes.' All of a sudden, I thought, 'Wait a minute! I

don't think there's ever been a Sherlock Holmes album, with all those great Sherlock Holmes themes!' That was the gestation. That's how the idea came up. Chris said, 'Go do it.' He loved the idea, because he envisioned the cover. That's how we do things at Varèse Sarabande: 'We'll have a nice cover!' And then hopefully we have a nice cover and a nice album to go with it."

Was it really so simple? "Absolutely! Chris is usually like the devil's advocate. He always says, 'Why will anybody want this?' He didn't say it with this one, though. He knows a good idea when he hears one. Sometimes I really have to fight and say, 'No! We really need to do this.' And then I can usually do what I want. But with this one, he knew. He loves Sherlock Holmes. His whole reason for doing it was just so he could have a recording of

the Moriarty theme from the Fox movie. He said, 'Oh, that's beautiful. It's one instrument that plays it, isn't it?' I said, 'Yeah, I think so.' 'Is it a tuba?' 'I don't think it's a tuba, no.'"

Brushing aside the grains of salt inevitably sprinkled when interviewing former actor Bruce Kimmel (he wrote and starred in the 1976 film **THE FIRST NUDIE MUSICAL** and is known to a legion of TV baby boomers as Laurie Partridge's sometimes boyfriend), *Scarlet Street* managed to gather a few salient facts about the music of **CLASSIC THEMES FROM 221B BAKER STREET**. Included on the CD are



Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes

adaptations from the scores of the Granada Sherlock Holmes series (Patrick Gowers), **THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES** (1939/Cyril Mockridge), **THE SCARLET CLAW** (1944/Frank Skinner), **DRESSED TO KILL** (1946/Frank Skinner), **THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES** (1959/James Bernard), **A STUDY IN TERROR** (1966/John Scott), **THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES** (1970/Miklos Rozsa), **THE SEVEN PERCENT SOLUTION** (1976/John Addison), **THE MASKS OF DEATH** (1984/Malcolm Williamson), **YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES** (1985/Bruce Broughton), and **WITHOUT A CLUE** (1988/Henry Mancini), the only film in the set in which Holmes doesn't actually appear.

A special treat is the seldom heard Stephen Sondheim song "I Never Do Anything Twice," originally sung by a brothel madam in **THE SEVEN PERCENT SOLUTION**. Kimmel explains: "This is the first time that song's



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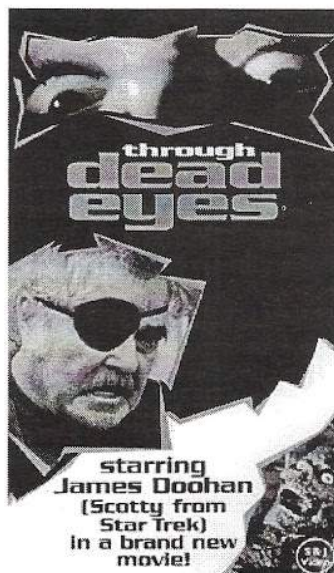
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**LEFT:** Music from the films of Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce is prominently featured on **SHERLOCK HOLMES: CLASSIC THEMES FROM 221B BAKER STREET**. **RIGHT:** The music box holds the clue in **DRESSED TO KILL** (1946). **BELOW LEFT:** Peter Cushing and John Mills in **THE MASKS OF DEATH** (1984).

really been orchestrated. It was in the movie briefly, but you didn't get the whole number. And it breaks up the album; it gives it a whole different slant. Judy Kaye had been singing it in her cabaret act, so she had it down cold. She brought out every nuance. Besides, I like to put a little filth on every recording, a little bondage and religious humor. It's always good for an album."

Tracking down the music was a bit of a Sherlock Holmes puzzle in itself. "It really was an adventure in that we had so much material to choose from, but very little of the music was readily available. When I hired Lanny Meyers to do the conducting and arranging, he said, 'Well? Where's the music?' And I said, 'I don't have a clue!'"

The music's whereabouts were shrouded in mystery, but Kimmel still knew what he wanted. "I knew up front that **THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES** had to be on the album. I knew I wanted the Fox and Universal main titles. I knew I wanted the Moriarty theme to be a recurring motif. Richard Valley sent us tapes of music from a bunch of the films. He suggested the John Scott score from **A STUDY IN TERROR** and the James Bernard **HOUND**. Lanny suggested the Bruce Broughton music from **YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES**, and then I

heard it myself and said, 'Of course! We must have that!' So little by little it all came together, but it was such a journey to find it all."

A vast number of whodunits concern a buried treasure of some sort or other, so it's only fitting that one was unearthed for **CLASSIC THEMES**. In this case, it concerns the legendary Hound of Hell and the equally legendary composer of that most famous of Hammer Horrors: **HORROR OF DRACULA** (1958)!

"Richard put me on to James Bernard for Hammer's **THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES**," remembers Kimmel, "but James had to go to Scotland or somewhere to find the bloody music! When he called up, he said, 'Bruce? I've found some good bits for you.' He had found the main title, of course. But then he said, 'I found this wonderful piece of music that they didn't use in **THE HOUND**. They replaced it with something from **HORROR OF DRACULA**, but it's a really wonderful piece of music.' I said, 'Great! I'd love to record it.' So that's how that came about. The missing music from **THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES**—and it is a really good piece of music!"

Happily, Bernard, who orchestrated his own suite for the album, was more than satisfied with the final results. Concerned that the orchestra might sound a little thin, he requested more than five violins for the string section. Varèse Sarabande countered with 20, more than he'd had for the original Hammer recording session!

"James Bernard was such a gentleman," says Kimmel. "They all were! They all thought the idea of the album was great. John Scott wrote out his own transcription from **A STUDY IN TERROR** and then we orchestrated from that. John Addison was, again, very supportive and helpful in that he called Universal and got them to get off their butts and find the music from **THE SEVEN PERCENT SOLUTION**."

What about the composers who have gone on to that great recording studio in the sky? "At Fox, we found the original Cyril Mockridge scores, and the interesting thing is that some of the cues are by David Raksin—who's still around, of course—and people I hadn't heard of; it's not all Mockridge. We had to go to the Rozsa family to get the **PRIVATE LIFE** piece and they were weird about it. It took a long negotiation with them. They





were concerned that it be done right. The hardest, the ones we never found and had to take from the films themselves, was the Frank Skinner music for Universal."

One of the most charming moments of the compilation comes with Frank Skinner's music box melody from *DRESSED TO KILL*. We first hear the music box itself, then "Sherlock Holmes" plucks the tune on his violin, whistling along as he does so. "It was Lanny's idea to use that. Richard had sent us a tape of *DRESSED TO KILL*, and Lanny called me up to say, 'There's this cute little thing in the movie, and we can have Guy Haines whistle it.' Listen, anything we can do to have Guy Haines on the album!"

For those unfamiliar with Varèse Sarabande's superb series of Broadway music albums, also produced by Bruce Kimmel, singer Guy Haines is a regular performer whose face is never shown in album liner notes. The mystery of his identity deepens when one realizes that "Guy Haines" is also the name of the murder suspect played by Farley Granger in Alfred Hitchcock's *STRANGERS ON A TRAIN* (1951), and that among those listed as *CLASSIC THEMES* orchestra members are such Hitchcock refugees as Melanie Daniels, Madeline Elster, Charlie Oakley, Lisa Fremont, Charlotte Inwood, Jo McKenna (credited on the cello, though surely she's a singer), Eve Gill, and Lester Townsend.

The recording session lasted two 14-work-hour days, using an orchestra of 57 pieces—"which is a good-sized orchestra," says Kimmel. "But I like the album because, in addition to the big stuff, it has these small parlor pieces, like the theme from *THE MASKS OF DEATH*, which is done with piano and violin only. The album has real variety."

Sequencing the various cuts proved to be a problem. "That's always, to my mind, the most difficult part of any album. If you put it in the wrong order it can ruin the record, no matter how good it is. I agonize and agonize over this. I must say, my first attempt was close. I think I went through three different orders before finally settling on what we have. It always began with the Granada score, but the second number changed five or six times. It was originally going to be *THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES*. Then I decided on using *THE SEVEN PERCENT SOLUTION*, because I wanted a piece in second place that had some weight and length to it. Then there was the ending. Originally, I had placed *WITHOUT A CLUE* earlier and I was going to end the album with *YOUNG SHERLOCK HOLMES*. But it didn't feel right to me. *WITHOUT A CLUE* simply felt like an end title."

Placing Judy Kaye's bawdy rendition of Sondheim's "I Never Do Anything Twice" was particularly troublesome. "When you have only one number on an album that's a vocal, it makes it hard in that you don't want to put it where people are going to say, 'What the hell is that?' You don't want to put it too close up front, because it's disruptive. It's imperative that it come in the right place at the right time. After all, some of those lyrics are pretty disruptive in themselves..."

And then there was the abbot  
Who worshipped at my feet  
And dressed me in a wimple and in veils  
He made a proposition  
That I found rather sweet  
And handed me a hammer and some nails  
—Stephen Sondheim

Approaching the end of our musical jaunt, *Scarlet Street* asked Bruce Kimmel if there was anything he had wanted to get on the album that didn't make the final cut. The answer wasn't long in coming:

"Let me think about that for moment, because I'm sure the answer is 'yes.' That's right—it was something from *SHERLOCK HOLMES IN NEW YORK*. We wanted it, but we ran out of time. Richard Rodney Bennett could not find the music. Lanny had no more time to transcribe from the tapes, so that didn't make it. I would have liked to include it, because I love Richard Rodney Bennett and it's a fun theme. So! Volume Two!"

Pass the salt, Mr. Kimmel... or might we hope that, in the case of the fun-filled *SHERLOCK HOLMES: CLASSIC THEMES FROM 221B BAKER STREET*, you're someone who will do something twice?





# SCREEN...



## and Screen AGAIN!

### Scarlet Street's Laser Review

#### THE HURRICANE

Samuel Goldwyn/HBO Home Video  
Two Sides CLV  
\$29.98

One of the most critically-undervalued works in the John Ford filmography, *THE HURRICANE* (1937) is as compelling and nuanced a cinematic narrative as most of his later, more celebrated films and, unlike, say, *THE QUIET MAN* (1953), *THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE* (1962) or *DONOVAN'S REEF* (1964), it is realized with a brisk, Capra-esque pace and visual fluency. Ford, the crusty liberal side of his traditionalism showing in virtually every setup, turns Dudley Nichols' morality play into a mini-epic that plays brilliantly on his familiar themes of courage, fidelity, and the arrogance of the white conqueror. Andrew Sarris quoted a French critic's observation that "there is a John Ford world with a distinctive look to it." *THE HURRICANE*'s South Pacific locale is of a piece with his mythic Old West and populated by a few of the same faces—C. Aubrey Smith, John Carradine, even Thomas Mitchell as yet another drunken doctor. Jon Hall and Dorothy Lamour are one of the most breathtakingly sexy couples in screen history and personify a sort of exuberant innocence that most of Ford's rather dopey juveniles miss completely.

The plot details a young South Sea Islander's (Hall) disastrous encounter with white colonial civilization and what passes for justice in it. A sailor who fancies that his first mate's cap "makes him the same as a white man," Hall decks a racist blowhard in a barroom brawl in Tahiti and finds himself serving a six-month stretch at hard labor. Thoughts of his new wife (Lamour) and a stubborn will to be free lead him to escape attempts and more prison time. His only hope of release lay with colonial administrator Raymond Massey (a rigid martinet in the mold of Henry Fonda's Col. Thurs-



day in 1948's *FORT APACHE*), who refuses out of an abstract sense of duty to the law. The climactic hurricane (a phenomenal piece of special effects conjuring that would have won an Oscar had they been handing them out for such things in 1937) comes as nature's rebuke to Massey for his pettiness and inhumanity. The film ends on much the same terms as *FORT APACHE* and *LIBERTY VALANCE*—sometimes a benign fiction is better and more humane than the truth. Ford had enough of the self-conscious huckster in his artistic worldview to be able to carry off this conceit again and again.

The laserdisc is very handsomely turned out with a gorgeous print, a reconstructed soundtrack (the music and effects tracks are on digital and analog right channels) and the original trailer.

—Ronald Dale Garmon

#### THE OLD DARK HOUSE

Image Entertainment  
Side One: CLV; Side Two: CAV  
\$39.99

"You'll have to stay here for the night. The misfortune is yours, not ours," grimly intones Ernest Thesiger to his unwelcome houseguests in James Whale's delightfully looney *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*. Long considered a lost film until its rediscovery in the 1960s, the 1932 Universal classic has cleared its legal hurdles to finally become available on laserdisc in an excellent presentation.

This quirky and most personal of Whale's movies finds the master director walking a tightrope between sending up the J. B. Priestley novel on which it was based and keeping its story line fairly intact. The result is one of the subtlest and endearing of all horror parodies which showcases Whale's uncanny knack for casting and tests his boundless cinematic flair even when confined to a few sets.

Although the film adheres to the standard situation of a group of wayward travelers forced to find shelter in a gloomy mansion (in this case, the homestead of a demented Welsh family known as the Femms), there's nothing at all standard about *THE OLD DARK HOUSE*. Beneath Whale's trademark dark humor and his stylish use of light, shadow, and mirrors lies the bedrock of Priestley's and scenarist Benn W. Levy's





characters. Except for the stock romantic leads played by Raymond Massey and Gloria Stuart, all of the characters are at least slightly out of kilter, if not downright loco. Boris Karloff is sadly wasted as the brutish family retainer, but the film provides pleasantly plummy roles for Thesiger, Charles Laughton, Eva Moore, and Melvyn Douglas. By the film's end, when the houseguests face the full onslaught of the hereditary Femm madness in a roof-raising climax, there isn't a family secret that hasn't been exposed.

Despite the priceless dialogue, Levy can't quite sustain the level of wit and, by the last reel, the film comes perilously close to slipping into the sort of creaky melodrama it's mocking. But *THE OLD DARK HOUSE* never was a picture for casual film audiences. Unless the viewer is charmed by its wonderfully florid acting styles or its serio-comic idiosyncrasies, it runs the risk of being dismissed as a mere curio.

Image has loaded the disc with a host of great bonuses and (with apologies to MCA) endeavored to make this far and away the best packaging of a Universal horror movie. Among the special features are a file of 62 production stills, including campaign ads, candid shots of the cast and crew, and art director Charles D. Hall's original sketches. An interview with director Curtis Harrington, who describes how he saved the print from decomposition in Universal's nitrate vaults, is also included, as are two full-length lecture tracks by Gloria Stuart and Whale biographer James Curtis.

Stuart's track is the real treasure, though. The sole survivor of the cast shares her decades-old anecdotes with astonishing recall, and analyzes Whale's style as cogently as any academic.

Considering the condition of the original negative, the print quality is fine, although the soundtrack is slightly muddy and the fluctuating contrast undercuts Arthur Edeson's photography.

Now, can someone please prevail upon Image to acquire the rights to the last known surviving print of James Whale's 1931 version of *WATERLOO BRIDGE*?

—Michael Brunas

#### **THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS**

Warner Home Video  
Side One: CLV; Side Two: CAV  
**\$34.98**

"Suggested by a *Saturday Evening Post* story by Ray Bradbury" (the O. Henry-esque "The Foghorn"), this low-budget feature was an immediate success and begat the horde of radiation-spawned creatures that ripped and smashed their way across American movie screens during the 1950s. Made in 1953 by Eugene Lourie (art designer on many Jean Renier classics), it was the first film for which Ray Harryhausen had full control of the special effects. The budget forced Harryhausen to create what he later called "a simplified technique of combining animated



models with live backgrounds" and the results are seamless and cleverly handled.

The story is a simple scientific romance, complete with plot elements that would later wear very thin from overuse (the stalwart, misunderstood scientist; some clipped, dry narration; a passionless and stilted love interest), but the Beast itself was one of the best of Harryhausen's

early creations and our first glimpse of it (waddling through an Arctic snowstorm) is still very impressive. The film also boasts an excellent David Buttolph score and the usual fine performance by the delightful Cecil Kellaway. The opening reel is rather scratchy and the otherwise great sound transfer is a trifle spotty at the beginning. The chapter stops are logically placed and draw one's attention to how well suspense is built and maintained throughout the film.

The cast includes Paul Christian, Paula Raymond, and Kenneth Tobey—and a live octopus and shark engaging in a mondo-style brawl. The second side is in full CAV, with freeze-frame, slow/fast motion, and random access capabilities.

—Ronald Dale Garmon

#### **EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS**

Columbia/Tristar Home Video  
Both Sides CLV  
**\$34.98**

Part of Columbia's "Ray Harryhausen Signature Collection," *EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS* (1956) is a ripe piece of Cold War paranoia based on a story by Curt Siodmak and written by George Worthington Yates and Raymond T. Marcus (the latter a pseudonym for the black-listed Bernard Gordon). It marked the second collaboration between Harryhausen and producer Charles H. Schneer and the film's highly topical premise presented the special-effects maven with an unusual problem—how to convincingly (and compellingly) animate a 12-inch metal dish. Harryhausen rose to the challenge admirably; the saucers are chilling sights indeed, especially as they go humming past Washington D.C. landmarks some 40 years before those same structures were blown to gravel in *INDEPENDENCE DAY*.

As is depressingly common with this sort of film, the effects far outstrip the plot and dialogue. This film has all the defects of much 1950s sci-fi (stiff, robotic acting, lots of forced bonhomie between the male characters, a freightload of brain-dead militarism) without the corresponding virtues of fun or the elusive "sense of wonder." Things aren't helped by Fred F. Sears' flat direction or the ridiculously repressed



performances from leads Hugh Marlowe and Joan Taylor. A definite plus is the one and only Paul Frees as the disembodied alien voice.

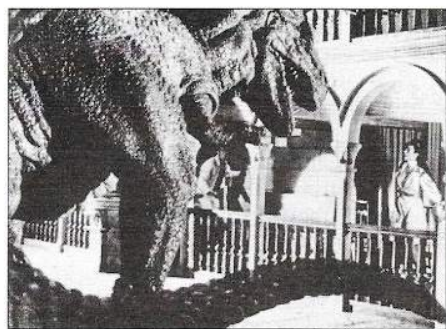
The disc includes the original trailer, a collection of storyboards, posters, and drawings, and an interview with Harryhausen conducted by Joe Dante. The picture quality is excellent, but the sound transfer is a trial. The audio on one's set jumps erratically from mumbled dialogue to dense, explosive noise and back again, inducing headaches and alarmed cries from neighbors.

—Ronald Dale Garmon

#### THE VALLEY OF GWANGI

Warner Home Video  
Both Sides CLV  
\$34.98

Without a doubt the worst film bearing Ray Harryhausen's name, this 1969 dinosaur western is a series of dramatic misfires and missed opportunities, shot through with waterheaded dialogue (old Gypsy woman: "I tell you, if he does not go back to the Forbidden Valley, we shall all suffer a terrible fate! My



eyes are blind, but I can still see the signs!") and gross ethnic stereotypes. (Latinos, in particular, are depicted in a childishly racist manner and there are also cartoon Gypsies and the inevitable silly-ass Englishman.) The core idea (supposedly concocted by Willis O'Brien and undeniably derivative of KING KONG) does have a certain retrograde appeal—a Wild West showbiz hustler (James Franciscus, laying on the smarm) hears tell of a lost valley in Mexico wherein dinosaurs and the Eohippus roam. Cash registers ring in his pomaded head and this oatmeal-Ziegfeld heads south, totin' rifles that fire blanks and in the company of the dumbest passel of cowpokes since the old Monogram "Range Busters." Things deteriorate from there. The

spavined old jackass of a plot finally collapses as the mighty Gwangi (a convincingly irritated Allosaurus) winds up roasting to death in a torched cathedral. Dreadful.

Harryhausen's monsters are, of course, as well done as ever and the charming Eohippus steals what little movie there is. The Jerome Moross score turns in some vigorous, Elmer Bernstein-style barks. Both the audio and video aspects of this disc are well-enough handled, save for a jolt of a side break.

—Ronald Dale Garmon

#### JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS

Columbia/TriStar Home Video  
Both Sides CLV  
\$34.95

A gorgeous 1963 adventure-fantasy and one of the best-loved films in the Harryhausen canon, JASON is mythology brought to broad, operatic life. It contains some of Harryhausen's most famous sequences, hung on a spare and elegant retelling of the quest for the Golden Fleece. The film cost some \$2.5 million and Schneer and Harryhausen (now associate producer) had hoped for a smash along the lines of THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD (1958), but were disappointed by poor box-office return. The completed film is still a great favorite of Harryhausen, who said, "Of the 15 fantasy features I have been connected with, I think JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS pleases me the most."

It is easy to see why—the picture is marvelous, from beginning to end. The characters are appropriately larger-than-life and declamatory (and played by such noted British underactors as Laurence Naismith, Niall MacGinnis, and Nigel Green) and the scenario is faithful to the emotions and motivations of the classical gods and mortals. For example, Jason spends a good deal of time upsetting Zeus' judgments and questioning Olympian motives in general. Harryhausen's art was at a career peak in JASON, with a gallery of monsters that everyone remembers from TV and Saturday matinees (the Hydra, the vicious harpies, and the incredible skeleton-warriors). The score is by the legendary Bernard Herrmann and the film was directed by Don Chaffey.

The disc is in CLV. Included is another interview with the Master of

Animation, this time conducted by John Landis. This being another in the "Ray Harryhausen Signature Collection," the sound quality is variable, though never quite replicating the ear-bludgeoning bleats and whirs of EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS.

—Ronald Dale Garmon

#### GOLDFINGER

MGM/UA Home Video  
Deluxe Collector's Edition  
Three discs, Side Five CLV  
\$99.98

This everything-but-the-kitchen-sink collector's edition is an absolute must for fans of 007 and the beleaguered action-adventure genre in general. Shot and released in 1963, it was the third and biggest of the Bond romps so far. Director Guy Hamilton brought a light, cartoonish touch to the series that would mark virtually every subsequent entry. Ian Fleming's iconic licensed killer and idol of Cartier-level consumption played savior to the wobbly postwar British film industry. Public and media response to this brilliantly-executed marketing phenomenon was early indication that the Cold War would best be appreciated by cinemagoers as sick humor. A cheerily brutal Organization Man with a hip detachment from the mayhem he creates for King and Country, Bond was (and remains) a wish-figure for millions of routine-yoked male fans. In the Bond films, as in DR. STRANGELOVE (1964) and the Harry Palmer series, the inflamed rhetoric of the global anticommun-





nist crusade translated easily into grotesquely caricatured villains and sublimely nutty schemes for world domination.

Sean Connery, of course, stars as 007 and his rugged Bogart-like charisma is on at full-blast here. Honor Blackman, already famous from British TV's *THE AVENGERS*, is Pussy Galore, her avowed lesbianism considerably muted in translation from novel to screen. Gert Frobe is so perfect as the crude, wildly ambitious Auric Goldfinger that few have ever noticed his dialogue was dubbed by another actor. (Frobe's command of spoken English apparently stopped with "How do you do?") Harold Sakata was a professional wrestler from Hawaii and the amusing Vicks 44 commercial he did (as Oddjob) is included among the supplementary material.

Said supplementary material is quite extensive. There are two documentaries, *THE MAKING OF GOLDFINGER* and *THE GOLDFINGER PHENOMENON* (a look at the promotion, marketing and public reaction), on Side Five and the original trailer, broadcast spots, and over 1,000 stills on Side Six. In addition, there is narration by Connery, Hamilton, Blackman, and many others on two separate analog tracks. In short, this is a welcome documentation of the film as a cultural product and artifact. The picture is letterboxed at a 1.66:1 aspect ratio.

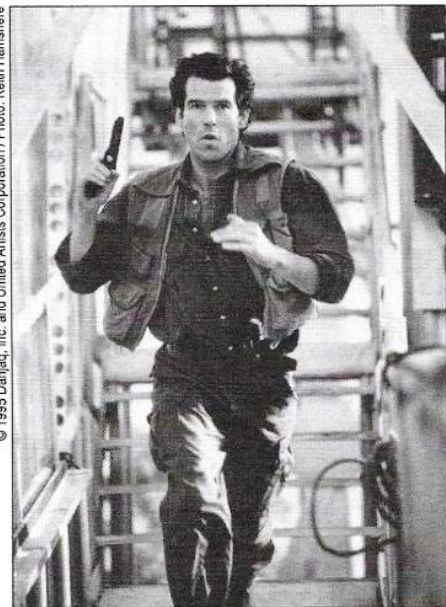
—Ronald Dale Garmon

#### GOLDENEYE

MGM/UA Home Video  
Sides One, Two, and Three CLV,  
Side Four CAV  
**\$44.98**

The latest 007 adventure features a new (and somewhat chastened) Bond in Pierce Brosnan and a very noticeable SPFX upgrade. The first Bond film in over a half-decade, *GOLDENEYE* (1995) succeeds to a degree in the task of salvaging a place for the series' "sexist, misogynistic dinosaur" of a hero in the post-Stalinist world of shifting allegiances and second thoughts. The new actor takes no chances with a proven commodity like Bond, his interpretation neatly splitting the wide difference between Connery's macho Everyman and Roger Moore's cheeky tailor's dummy. Commander Bond even gets a chance to flex his wits with a little

detective work and Brosnan makes us believe that this 007 has a proper grasp of the international political game. There is a new M (the excellent Judi Dench as a Thatcherite "Iron



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Lady"), a new Moneypenny (Samantha Bond, refreshingly immune to Brosnan's flirtatious advances) and the same old humorless Q (the redoubtable Desmond Llewelyn). The chief villain is Bond's doppelgänger—Alex Trevelyan (Sean Bean), a Kim Philby-esque 006 scarred by history and happenstance. He gets all the best lines, at one point asking 007 if his scrupulously shaken martinis manage to "drown out the screams of all those you've killed?" A secondary heavy is, predictably, yet another sexually aggressive female—kickboxing star Famke Janssen as Xenia Onatopp. (The level of wit is in the Fleming tradition, at any rate.) She kills her lovers by scissoring them in her thighs and takes an orgasmic delight in slaughter.

Slaughter there is aplenty, with 007 accounting for a lion's share, Indiana Jones-fashion, of uniformed extras. There are any number of Dolby Surround (AC-3 Digital) explosions and the magnificent pre-credit sequence bungee-jump set a world free-fall record. Director Martin Campbell is a careful, unsubtle craftsman in the Renny Harlin mold and should have a future (in the Bond series, at least) as a choreographer of set-piece Armageddons. The disc is letterboxed at an eye-catching 2.35:1 aspect ratio and this

special edition contains an LWT special, *THE WORLD OF 007*, hosted by Elizabeth Hurley, over 15 trailers and television spots, and Analog Left commentary by director Campbell and producer Michael G. Wilson.

—Ronald Dale Garmon

#### DRACULA VS. FRANKENSTEIN

The Roan Group  
Both sides CLV  
**\$49.95**

"The *HEAVEN'S GATE* of Independent-International Pictures," Al Adamson's endearingly scabby tribute to the Universal "monster rally" films of the '40s is now out on laser with a first-class print and analog commentary by producer Sam Sherman. This film requires no introduction for fans of '70s exploitation movies and one almost envies those who have yet to groove to its many outré delights—J. Carrol Naish's mushy dentures, Anthony Eisley's wry smirk, the Kenneth Strickfadden lab equipment crackling and hissing over the overripe dialogue, the lovely Regina Carol, and the very stoned-looking Russ Tamblyn. One either appreciates filmmaking on this level or one doesn't, and, for lovers of such oddities (such as this writer), the new Roan release is both entertaining and informative.

Conceived as a followup to I. I.'s hugely successful *SATAN'S SADISTS* (1970), the picture was originally titled *THE BLOOD SEEKERS* (aka *THE BLOOD FREAKS*) and had a running time of slightly over 60 minutes. When Sherman and Adamson first screened it for backers in NYC, the money men advised the two to shelve the film and resigned themselves to a financial loss. Sherman saw value in the footage and refashioned it, first as *BLOOD OF FRANKENSTEIN*, later as *DRACU-*

*Continued on page 98*







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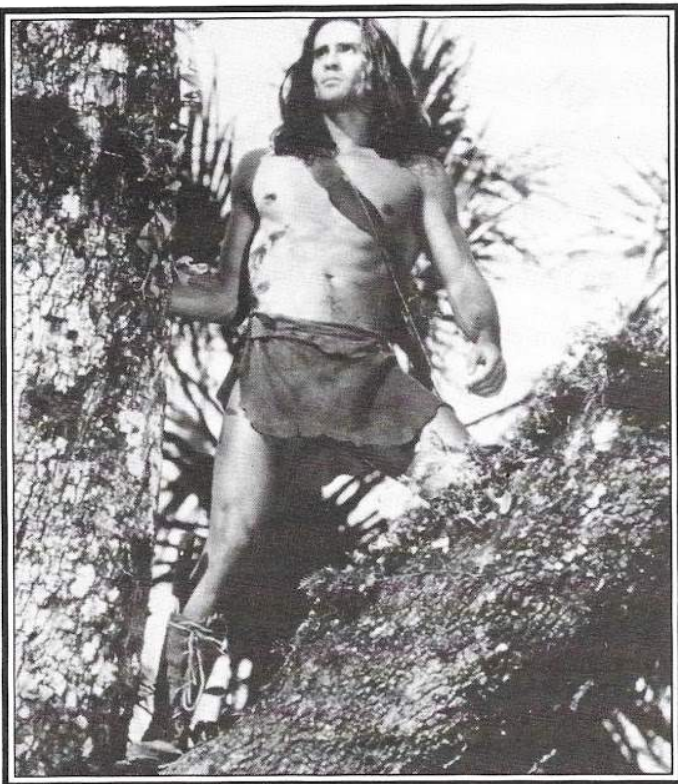
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# TARZAN SWINGS AGAIN!

by Ronald Dale Garmon  
and Jessie Lilley

American swinging on a vine, Tarzan has remained a pop icon. From the stiff, silent nobility of Elmo Lincoln through Johnny Weissmuller's cheerful '30s everyape and well beyond, the jungle king's bulky lineaments have been filled out by actors who expressed something of the era's masculine ideal.

"My perspective on Tarzan has grown," says Joe Lara, a long-haired California surfer and guitar player who "has a hard time rising past 6 AM." Lara played Tarzan once before, seven years ago in *TARZAN IN MANHATTAN*. What's different this time around? "That's an interesting question. I just feel that now, personally, I am more ready to handle everything that comes with having your own TV show. I think that my perspective of Tarzan has grown as well. I have more of a latitude of understanding about who this guy is and how he works. I never dreamed that I would be doing this."

Lara's Tarzan wears some unfashionable moccasins ("You've really got to in the high veldt") and a rather too generous loincloth. It was suggested that he was a bit over-dressed. "It's more of a practical thing. I've cut my feet enough times to know that I was all for having something on my feet. When you're running around and jumping, it's easier. The real Tarzan had such tremendously tough feet that he wouldn't need it, but I'm a city boy."

And as a city boy from LA, how does Joe Lara keep himself in shape to play the not-quite-naked savage? "Oh, it's not something that I really enjoy, but I work out and train pretty hard. It's just part of the whole image and part of the job."

Unlike many previous ape men, Joe Lara is performing some of his own stunts. "Well, I probably do 85% of them." Aren't the producer's worried about their star? "Oh, I don't know. If they want me to jump off something or swing, I look at the situation and make a judgement as to whether it's really something I want to do or not. If I don't think I'm gonna get hurt—if I feel it's within me—then I do it. But if it's something that's a bit more spectacular or dangerous, I think the producers and myself agree that it's not a good idea."

According to producer Siegel, the new Tarzan "is going to be more intelligent and literate than the John-

Edgar Rice Burroughs' Lord of the Apes returns to the small screen this Fall in a \$25 million series. The creative team promises fidelity to the original novels and gold-plated production values rivaling both *HERCULES* and *STAR TREK* in fantasy elements and "viewer-friendliness." Well-muscled Joe Lara inherits the leopard skin mantle previously draped over the ample shoulders of Johnny Weissmuller, Lex Barker, and Ron Ely. The series is being shot at the Sun City resort in South Africa and sets are going up to approximate Opar, Pellucidar, Atlantis, and the mythical African jungles of the American fantasist's imagination. "It can be done," producer Paul Siegel (whose TV credits include *FAME* and the ubiquitous *BAYWATCH*) enthused to *Scarlet Street*, "It's gonna be bigger and better than anything we can do anywhere in the world."

Why Tarzan and why now? The answer is simple: "The popularity of *HERCULES* and *XENA*. Tarzan was created as an action hero. Tarzan goes on quests. He visits different worlds; he comes across different creatures. We were looking for a series that would follow through in the same fantasy genre as *HERCULES* and *XENA*, and we had it with Tarzan."

Burroughs, who "wrote to escape poverty," created his Lord of the Jungle in 1912 out of the cultural tensions and preoccupations of early 20th-century America, a time when elite and popular opinion makers fretted over the decline of the Anglo-American "Great Race" and thrilled to the rhetorical bombast of short, plump, near-sighted Theodore Roosevelt. For readers of pulp fiction, raised to embrace social Darwinian dogma of society-as-jungle, the renegade 14th Earl of Greystoke represented both an escape from a corroding and superficial civilization and a metaphor for the ordinary person's constant struggle against that devouring beast. Whether as a racist fantasy-figure, a Rousseauian natural man who "lit out for the territory," or merely another well-adjusted



ny Weissmuller type." The jungle lord will gradually learn the languages of the various animal species as well as know English, French, and German. (They will all have to find their way through Lara's easygoing West Coast accent.) The 18th Tarzan has read "nine or ten" of the Burroughs originals. Supervising producer Michael McGreevey uses phrases like "a loner, without family," "natural selection," and "survival of the fittest" to describe Lara's interpretation.

Lara's enthusiasm for his character comes across when discussing the episodes already in the can. "What the writers are trying to do is use the books as formats for the scripts. Tarzan will be taken out of the jungle, but not completely. I'm hoping that they keep a lot of the jungle stuff in while they're trying to capture the Burroughs science-fiction look, but the stories are basically Tarzan on different adventures. He meets the Leopard Queen, he meets La of Opar . . ."

McGreevey continues: "Joe has a really good handle on it. In fact, he's one of the producers. He's very into Africa and into Tarzan, so he brings an awful lot of personal understanding to the role . . . he really is Tarzan. Strangely enough, Joe has led us into an area that has really opened up the show. The one area that brings out drama in Tarzan is this area of aloneness. In a round-about way, even though we're doing an action/adventure series with a ton of action, we're also doing very personal stories, centered around Tarzan's conflict over

his duality and his attempt to deal with his aloneness and feelings of isolation. Joe brings a true understanding of that to the role.

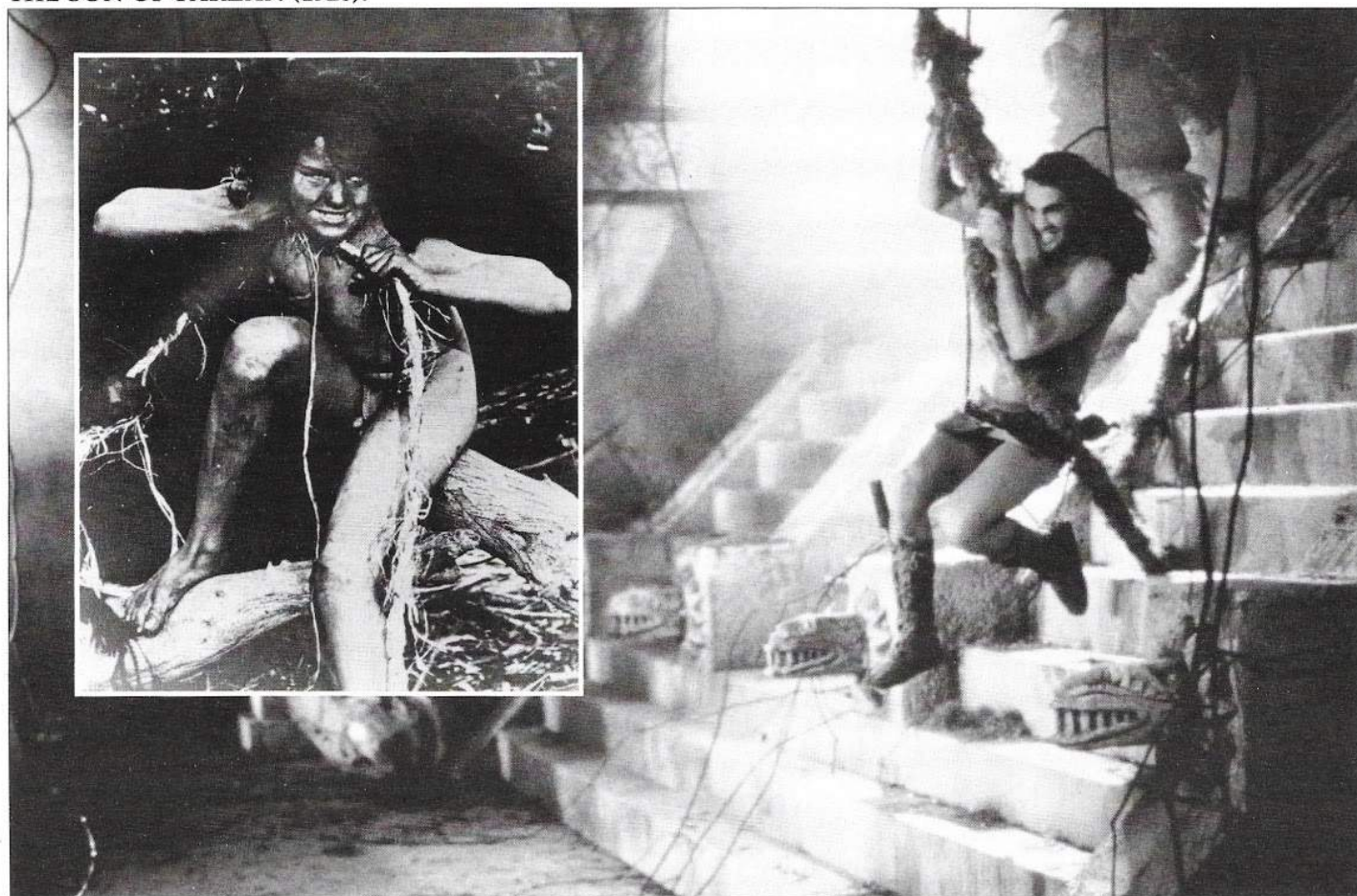
"Joe wants to educate people with man's place in the natural order of things. He can't go as far as he'd like. He wanted scenes with Tarzan eating raw meat from the kill. Television won't tolerate that kind of grittiness."

Perhaps not, but Joe Lara's enthusiasm is not to be dampened. "There's a show called 'Lost Legion,' where Tarzan comes upon this old Roman outpost, where they still think that Rome is in power. That's the second one we shot and the sets are absolutely incredible! It's very epic, you might say."

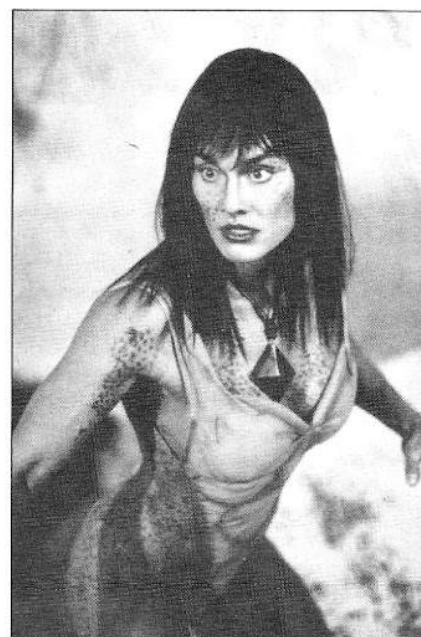
Burroughs fans have long waited for La of Opar, the thoroughly mad Atlantean High Priestess whose advances have the maniacal singleness of an urban stalker, to take her rightful place before the Tarzan cameras. In the Burroughs stories, the savage beauty had a definite "thing" for the Lord of the Jungle. Will the EPIC ADVENTURES' La have a "thing" for Lara? "Yes. In fact, Edgar Rice Burroughs said that he actually wished that he'd made La more attached to Tarzan, because she was actually more 'right' for Tarzan than Jane."

Jane Porter, the shipwrecked American beauty abducted by the "white ape"—or, in the language of the Great Apes (ERB's "first men"), "Tarzan"—is conspicuously absent from TARZAN: THE EPIC ADVENTURES. McGreevey, who enjoys "full creative control" over the

**OPPOSITE PAGE AND BELOW:** Joe Lara is the latest swinger in a long line of actors to play Tarzan of the Apes, but he'll be the first to journey to the many lost lands of the original Edgar Rice Burroughs novels. **INSET:** Gordon Griffith was the first actor to play Little Lord Greystoke, in the early scenes of TARZAN OF THE APES (1918). He is the only actor ever to play both Tarzan and Tarzan's son, Korak the Killer, a role he essayed in THE SON OF TARZAN (1920).







**LEFT:** Africa's Sun City provides the settings for many episodes of **TARZAN: THE EPIC ADVENTURES**. Here, Tarzan (Joe Lara) invades the lair of the Leopard Queen. **RIGHT:** In Pellucidar, Burroughs' land at the center of the Earth, Tarzan meets Mora, Queen of the Mahars (Cory Everson). The new show may even find its way to Burroughs' pulp fiction version of Venus before it's through.

series, reminds us that "Burroughs was quoted as saying that the biggest mistake he ever made was creating Jane. He wanted to kill her off, but his wife talked him out of it." He also allows that "an action/adventure hero with a wife is a limited franchise."

Granted, but what does our jungle gent think about it? And where does that leave Korak the Killer, Tarzan and Jane's son in the Burroughs originals (as opposed to Boy in the Weissmuller series)? Without Jane, Korak doesn't stand a chance. "Well," muses Lara, "I think it depends on what direction we want to take this show. We're trying to keep Jane in the distance. She's mentioned, Tarzan makes reference to her, but she's not in the stories yet. We want to give the people in the market place the things that we advertised, which is Tarzan going to all these different places. I think there will be a Jane eventually, but right now they're keeping her on the periphery."

"Of course," comments Siegel, "fans know primarily the first two books, where Tarzan marries Jane and makes a decision to go back to Africa after being in Europe for a few years. The next 22 books concern his exploits in Africa and all these different places. These have never been shown on television before. We thought it would be terrific."

McGreevey further points out, "We're sort of in the middle of the second book, *The Return of Tarzan*, where he still has strong feelings for Jane, but he still feels that she wouldn't fit into his world and he knows that he can't fit into hers. He's at that critical point, and it's a good point to be at dramatically, because he still longs for her. The romance stuff that we're doing in the show is wonderful, because Jane comes up every time. She's obviously in his mind, but they're not together. But though Jane will not be physically present, she will be in the mind of the audience and be kept very much alive."

Asked if he has a hand in the scripts, McGreevey confesses, "That's my real background, writing—but I'm the supervising producer. I'm not hands-on writing,

though I have worked with the writers in terms of story and character. We're trying very hard to improve the writing in the show, and each show, I think, is getting better and better."

McGreevey has an extensive show biz background. He's a former Disney actor, who costarred with Kurt Russell in *THE COMPUTER WORE TENNIS SHOES* (1970) and *SNOWBALL EXPRESS* (1972), and who once said to his mother, "I was playing ping pong with this old man." And the guy that was with me said, "That was no old man! That was Mr. Disney!" I found out later that he liked to play me 'cause he could beat me. He wasn't a very good ping pong player!"

With over 25 feature films and well over 100 TV appearances to his credit, McGreevey believes that, if people remember him as an actor, it's definitely for his Disney roles with Russell. "Amazingly, they rerun those movies so much! Kurt called recently and said, 'You know you're old! They're remaking one of our movies!'"

In addition to La, **TARZAN: THE EPIC ADVENTURES** will feature other murderous females in the bejeweled persons of the Leopard Queen and Mora, Queen of the Mahars. Will Tarzan and that other Burroughs hero, John Carter of Mars, meet in this series? McGreevey's reply: "We have the rights to the Venus books and seeing as how Tarzan never went to Venus, we're gonna figure out a way to get him there. We can't go to Mars, though, because the Disney people own those rights."

Tarzan's old rival from the first three novels, Rokoff, will also appear in the series. "He's in the first two hours, and he'll return. What happens is that Rokoff winds up being trapped in Pellucidar. In the 13th or 14th show, he resurfaces."

Though plundering the novels for ideas, McGreevey and the writers are also updating (and complicating) the Tarzan myth. Leaning on the old TV trope of the "co-lead," the series has introduced Themba (Aaron Seville), a prince of the lost Wagambi tribe. Themba is



Tarzan's boyhood friend, an African of kingly lineage who fears that a Western education and long absence from home ill fits him to lead his people. He is rather like STAR TREK's Worf in his multicultural heritage and conflicting ideals. Or, in the words of Michael McGreevey, "Themba's a combination of some of the Burroughs characters and a creation for the American television market place."

Lara clearly has reservations about the innovation. "In my opinion, it is too much of a buddy show." Perhaps, but both XENA, WARRIOR PRINCESS and HERCULES, two programs whose audience the producers are actively courting, have similar "buddy" elements. It is also difficult to expect a series set and created in Africa not to have at least one strong, recurring African character. Themba's dilemma is similar to that of the lead; they belong to neither of the worlds that have shaped their identities.

McGreevey's joy in the series is clearly evident when discussing the creatures that inhabit Tarzan's realm. "We've got a marvelous guy, John Beuchler, who is our creature creator. John is like a kid in a candy shop. He grew up drawing pictures of Oparians. He read Edgar Rice Burroughs as a kid, and, having an artistic bent, he always was fascinated with drawing these things. He is having a ball! He showed me a drawing just the other day—he's going to be doing a spider monster!"

McGreevey is also thrilled with the sets. "Matter of fact, I was just up at the sacrificial temple today," he jokes. "We're shooting the High Priestess of Opar episode this week."

The two-hour pilot was shot in Orlando, Florida, but the series is being made in South Africa, with quite a few sequences filmed at the notorious Sun City resort. Sun City was once the target of an international artists' boycott against the reviled apartheid-based racial politics of the old regime. The physical contours of the resort's fantasy Africa, with its tidal machines and artificial beaches and waterfalls, are in perfect synch with both Burroughs' exuberant imagination and the "otherworldly" aspects of the series. (A preview of the

series reveals some impressive effects work, particularly the ape costumes and the "morphed" transformation of the Leopard People).

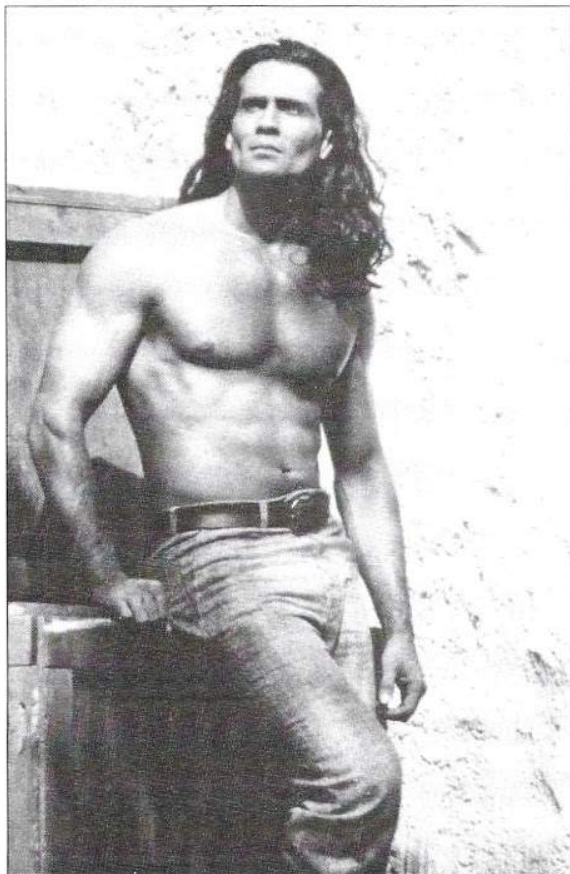
"When I first came on the show," recalls McGreevey, "someone told me that this would be the first TARZAN shot in Africa. I found out, when I did my research, that we're not. Actually, there were three that were shot here in Africa. Not in South Africa; they were shot in Kenya. In the late '30s, Edgar Rice Burroughs very angrily formed his own company because he thought that Hollywood never really touched any of his stories! So he got funding and went to Africa to shoot. Unfortunately, they got into financial problems and Burroughs sold his interests and walked away from it. Shooting TARZAN in Africa is the obvious thing to do, but up until now it's been a novel idea. South Africa doesn't look like Africa—or what we think of as Africa."

The choice of location also has its bottom-line aspects. "The truth is, filming in South Africa is a lot cheaper. That's really what it comes down to," McGreevey admitted to *Scarlet Street*. Equipment rentals, labor costs, and post-production expenses are much lower there than in the United States, Canada, or Australia, and the management was quick to see the advantages of filming in a country with a depressed currency. "When this show is shipped to the States, it's finished. There's nothing to do in L.A." Thus does capital flight, another recent (and for American workers, depressing) innovation, aid in the telling of a very old story.

Asked what it's like to film in South Africa, Lara replies, "I love this country. This is my fifth

movie here, and I think South Africa is an enchanting place. It's not a culture shock, because we all share the same language, but there are definite differences."

According to Joe Lara, the first season will wrap "at the end of December." But before they're done, THE EPIC ADVENTURES OF TARZAN will swing onto U.S. TV screens this fall. Don't miss it!



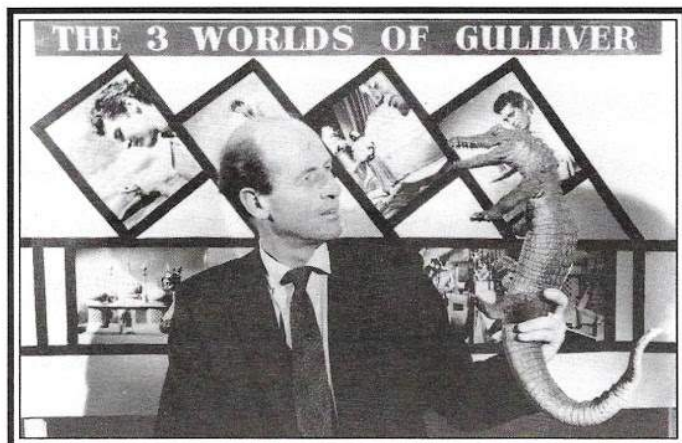
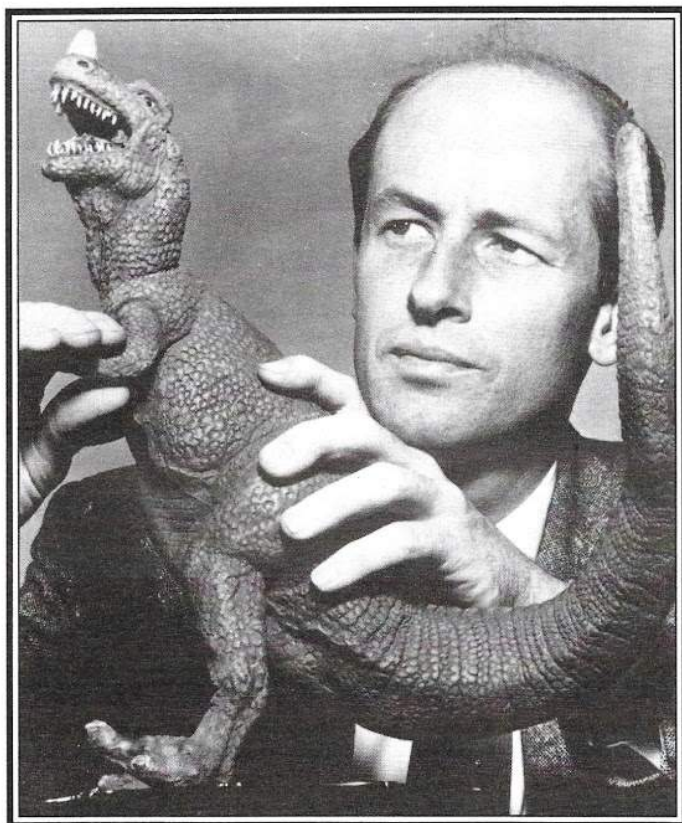
Joe Lara as Tarzan

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# The Golden Touch of RAY Harryhausen

Article by Robert Sokol  
Interview by Richard Valley

Special Effects. F/X. Sound Effects. Matte Shots. Digital Imaging. Morphing. Stop Motion. Go Motion. Animation. They are a part of every motion picture that is made. From the simple focusing of a light to the sweetening of sound by a foley artist, reality is enhanced and a special effect is created.

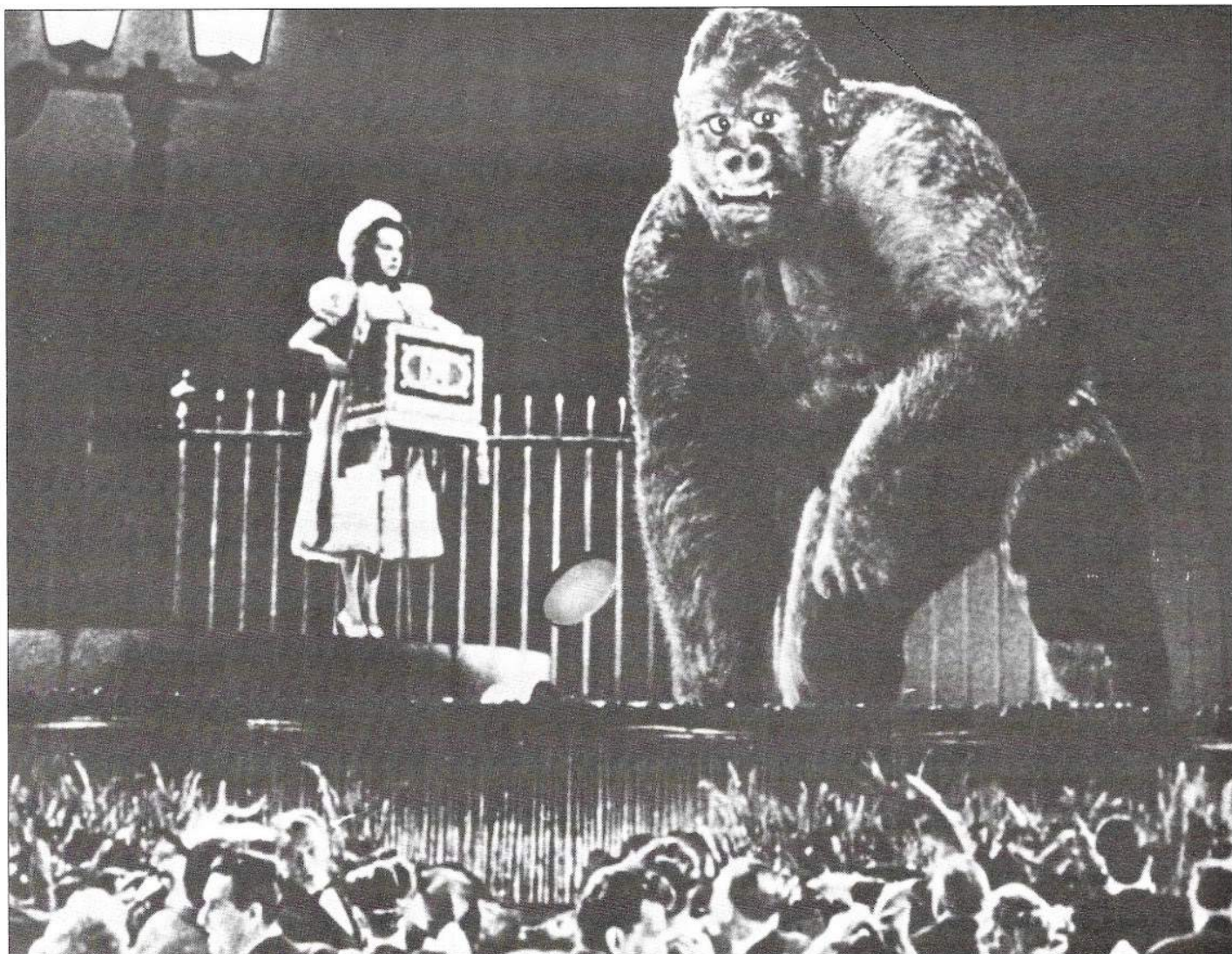
Special Effects. Say the words. Not "speshulefex," but a special effect. Many effects are born out of practical needs. A building no longer exists, a time period has passed, or your leading lady is taller than your leading man. But creating the illusion of reality for something that could not happen or does not exist is as old as the movies themselves. As far back as 1902, Georges Méliès took viewers on A TRIP TO THE MOON which still delights with its fanciful view of space travel as much as 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY did over 60 years later.

In the early days, many talented men and women toiled in anonymity behind the scenes, creating wonderful images to delight, horrify, or inspire the viewer. But in 1927, the motion picture industry gave itself a collective pat on the back by birthing the (International) Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences—and, more important, the Academy Award.

That first year, special effects of any kind were lumped together into a catch-all category called Engineering Effects, to be given to the person who "rendered the best achievement in producing effects of whatever character obtained by engineering or mechanical means." This included every technical part of a motion picture except the kitchen sink of cinematography. The winner was Roy Pomeroy for WINGS, which also snagged the first Best Picture Oscar, then called Best Production. (For some reason, the Engineering Effects category was dropped the following year and no award was given.) Around the same time, a lad named Ray was spending an awe-ful time in Los Angeles movie theaters wondering how'd they do that?

"In my childhood, I'd always been exposed to fantasy. My parents took me to see METROPOLIS and THE LOST WORLD in the late 1920s. A lot of German films were of the fantasy nature. So I sort of got initiated and it struck a note in me. One can never really analyze why it appealed to me more than anything else. It was peculiar





OPPOSITE PAGE: Ray Harryhausen poses one of the denizens of *THE ANIMAL WORLD* (1956), goes eye to eye with the alligator of *THE 3 WORLDS OF GULLIVER* (1960), and gives a stony smile while holding the head of Medusa, one of the stop-motion stars of *CLASH OF THE TITANS* (1981). ABOVE: For Terry Moore, it may have been the same old grind, but *MIGHTY JOE YOUNG* (1949) copped an Oscar for special effects.

to my Germanic nature, Gothic nature—whatever you'd call it."

It wasn't long before Ray's fascination with both movies and three-dimensional forms led him to get his hands dirty with the creative process—literally. "In grammar school, one of our projects was to duplicate California missions in clay. I got used to working in clay and working with my hands. I always preferred dimensional objects to flat drawings."

A pivotal point in the youngster's life occurred in 1933 and a career came calling. "My interest in stop-motion animation came about with *KING KONG*. I saw it when I was 14 years old and I haven't been the same since. Shows you how powerful the media of motion pictures is. My hobby before *KONG* was making little dioramas of the La Brea tar pit. Then, when I saw *KONG*, I saw a means of making clay move."

While young Ray's fascination with movie magic developed, the Academy Awards also grew—in stature, quantity, and in complexity. In 1939, the first Special Effects Oscar was handed to *THE RAINS CAME* over such heady competition as *GONE WITH THE WIND*, *TOPPER TAKES A TRIP*, and, if you can believe it, *THE*

*WIZARD OF OZ*. Meanwhile, special categories in Scientific or Technical Achievement, resulting in citations, plaques, or actual Oscars had been implemented several years earlier.

*KONG* and the creative possibilities the great ape represented continued to fascinate the boy. "I didn't know anything about stop-motion, but I made it my business to find out. I knew it wasn't a man in a suit, I knew it wasn't real, so I had to delve deeply, because there wasn't a lot written about it. They wanted to keep it a secret. There were a lot of misleading articles in *Popular Mechanics*. They showed an illustration [of] a man playing an organ in one corner, with wires running from the organ to this gigantic robot ape, and that's how they told you *KONG* was made. I knew that couldn't be true. Finally, *Look* magazine came out with some behind-the-scenes pictures and I met somebody who worked at RKO, so I found out the glories of stop-motion animation."

Harryhausen's eager pursuit of the Eighth Wonder of the World led not only to a brilliant career, but set the stage for the formation of two significant and lifelong friendships. "In those days, the only way you could see a film again was to go to some flea pit way out in the

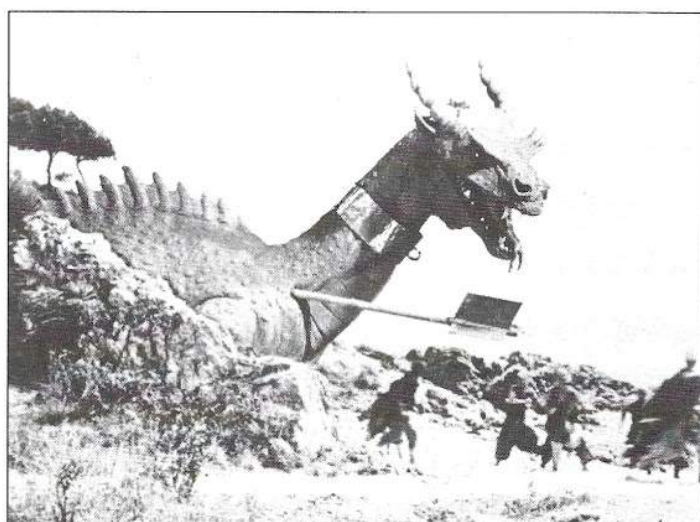




sticks—and I saw KING KONG was playing out in Hawthorne, California, just outside of Inglewood. I got on the streetcar and went out there. These beautiful stills were out in the foyer, gorgeous stills that I hadn't seen since the initial showing. I asked the manager if I could copy them. He told me he didn't own them, but that somebody by the name of Forrest J Ackerman did. He gave me his phone number and said, 'Call him; maybe he'll let you have some copies.' So I called Forry and he said, 'Yes, I'd be glad to loan them to you, but I want them back.' He told me about a Los Angeles science fiction group that met every Thursday evening at Clifton's Cafeteria. There were about 15 writers and young people who were interested in talking about space platforms. There was an Egyptologist, and Heinlein was one of the writers before he became famous, and there was Ray Bradbury, who was a striving young writer who kept getting rejection slips from *Weird Tales*. But he never got discouraged and look what happened! We all had mutual interests in dinosaurs and space platforms and going to the moon. Of course, people thought you were a little eccentric talking about space platforms, so we must have been ahead of our time."

Bolstered by the camaraderie of his newfound friends, Harryhausen began to turn his ideas into experiments. The eager teenager's early efforts in filmmaking tested his mother's patience—and her wardrobe—but it only confirmed for him that he was on the right path. "I did use my mother's fur coat. I didn't think she needed it anymore. I needed some fur. I didn't have anything and I didn't know much about taxidermists. So I got her coat, which was black, and I put the fur on my cave bear, which was one of my first animated models. It was shot outside in the sunlight and it took all day. I had no lights, so I had to use the sun. Of course, the shadows all moved across the screen because it took all day to animate it. I borrowed a friend's camera; I didn't have a camera myself. To shoot one frame, you had to tap the camera top, because it didn't have a one-frame attachment. You had to tap it and hope you got one frame. Sometimes you got two, sometimes you got three . . . the animation was quite jerky, but I was delighted to see my cave bear move all by itself.

"I started, in color, a film called *EVOLUTION*. I wanted to show the history of the world, and being fascinated with the dinosaurs I started with dinosaurs. But I was going to show whirling space with the nebulas, and all the sea creatures . . . it was a very ambitious



project, more than one person should even think about, but I thought I could tackle it. I did a lot of experiments with the dinosaurs. Then *FANTASIA* came out with that wonderful dinosaur sequence. I lost interest and abandoned the project."

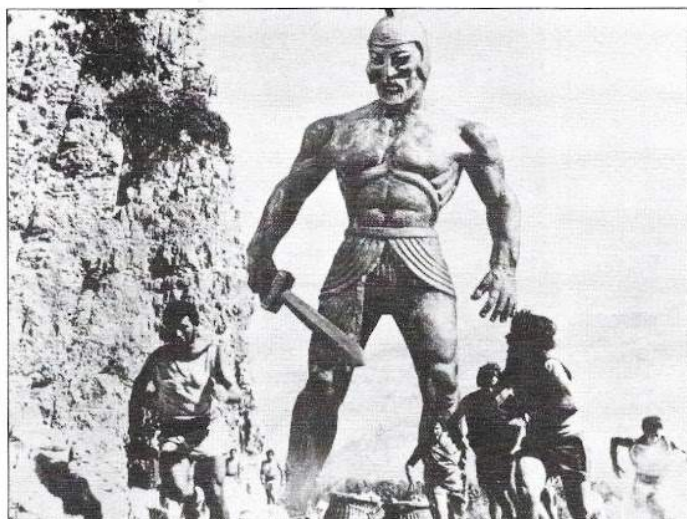
Though incomplete, *EVOLUTION* was not a total waste of time. Harryhausen showed his dinosaur footage to recently-arrived, Hungarian-born director George Pal, who was then producing short-subject animated cartoons for Paramount. Pal was impressed and Harryhausen landed his first job in the movies. Working on *THE PUPPETOONS* became "Stop-Motion Photography 101" for Harryhausen, but he soon discovered that animating replacement figure puppets was not where his passion lay. Something else was calling. Something bigger. Darker. Hairier.

The call was interrupted by World War II. After a hitch in the army, Harryhausen returned to Hollywood and tried to decide on a new path for his career. "I didn't go back to George after the war. I'd been two years with George. I enjoyed it. It was a great experience. It wasn't until after the war that George went on to features, when the cost of making short subjects kept rising. It wasn't economical with the amount of money they finally cost to produce, particularly when the unions started getting involved. So George went into features, which was a good idea. He wanted me to come back after I got out of the army, but I was afraid I'd get caught in that corporate type of thing. You sort of disappear in the mechanism. One of the best things that happened to me was to apply for a job [with] Disney and never get it. I'd probably have been an obscure animator in the big wheel, although I admired [Disney] greatly and would have been delighted at the time to work for him. But the fickle finger of fate stepped in.

"I had called Willis O'Brien up when I was still in high school and told him of my interests. He invited me down to MGM, where he was making experiments and tapes, so I loaded some of my animals in a suitcase and brought them down. He had a staff of four artists making paintings and charcoal drawings of movie scenes. There was a two-room office covered with wonderful drawings. I walked through with my mouth open. It was really an exciting experience. He was my mentor. I worshipped KONG for so long, so to finally meet the man who did it was enormously rewarding."

Like George Pal before him, O'Brien was impressed enough with his young fan to bring him onto the team





**OPPOSITE, LEFT TO RIGHT:** In 1955, *IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA* to wreak havoc on San Francisco. The fire-breathing dragon of *THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD* (1958) meets his end via giant cross-bow. Talos returns to life to end the lives of *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS* (1963). **BELOW:** Harryhausen's *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS* (1953) was based in part on a short story by Ray Bradbury.

Beaks, came in with a *Saturday Evening Post*, threw it on the table, and said, "We've got to get this in the picture!" Of course, Ray's story was short. It was a very short story and you couldn't make a whole feature out of it, but we bought the rights so we could use the title *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS*. There was a big illustration of the monster attacking a lighthouse, so we incorporated that particular sequence into the film among other sequences that we developed."

Harryhausen's stature grew with each succeeding project. *IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA* in 1955 was followed by *EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS* (1956) and *20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH* (1957). Weary of putting the modern world in the grip of colossal terror, Harryhausen turned to legends and flights of fantasy for a new direction. "The main reason *THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD* came about was because I was getting tired of constantly doing dinosaurs destroying things. You can't just keep doing that, and there was no other outlet, really, for stop-motion. We did have an octopus pull the Golden Gate bridge down, and I destroyed Washington with flying saucers and New York with a beast—but how far can you go? There was still

for his next project. For Harryhausen the project was a dream come true, a chance to get into some real monkey business.

*MIGHTY JOE YOUNG* (1949) is a lighter take on the legend of KONG. Smaller in stature than his cinematic ancestor, Joe's adventures in civilization combined comedy with drama and action. The animation sequences were painstakingly created and the lessons learned by O'Brien in his first ape-pic were improved upon by the new team. Harryhausen remembers:

"Kong had that flickering effect of his fur moving, because you had to grab the model to move it. Every time you do it, you disturb the hair fractionally and it flickers, but it became part of his character. You sure missed it in the remake. For *MIGHTY JOE YOUNG*, we had a young George Lockrin, who devised a way of removing the hide of the fur and replacing it with rubber without disturbing the pattern of the hair. That helped enormously in not showing the violent disturbances you got from the rabbit fur that covered Kong. There were four [main] models built and we had two others—one about 10 inches high and another 13 inches high for a long shot. The one I fell in love with and tried to use all the time was one of the early models. It seemed to have more of a gorilla feel to it than the others. I called it gorillahood—there was manhood and gorillahood. Logical, isn't it?"

*MIGHTY JOE YOUNG* received the 1949 Oscar for Special Effects and the career of Ray Harryhausen, special effects master, was launched. Harryhausen's next effort was *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS* (1953) and it reunited the Rays, Harryhausen and Bradbury—if only peripherally—from their earlier days as members of the Sci-Fi Round Table. "[A] script was already written and called *THE MONSTER FROM BENEATH THE SEA*. Lou Morheim was working on it. Eugene Lourie was involved as a director and art director. I read the script and there were not too many highlights that I could see for animation. That picture had to be made very cheaply, because it didn't have much of a budget. Then one day, the head man, Jack







**LEFT:** Inspired by the scene-stealing robots of *STAR WARS* (1977), Ray Harryhausen gave Harry Hamlin the bird in *CLASH OF THE TITANS* (1981)—a mechanical owl. **RIGHT:** Medusa is one of Harryhausen's grandest creations.

Europe, but then again you're getting repetitious. So I was looking for a new outlet, something different for stop-motion animation [other] than just "monsters on the loose" pictures. That's when I came up with the idea of *THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. The first drawing I made was of the skeleton on the spiral staircase. I'd always wanted to animate a skeleton, because they're most interesting and we all have them inside us. I couldn't figure out how I could do a modern story with a living skeleton—it would have to be a comedy—so I ransacked *The Arabian Nights* and Sinbad struck me as the personification of adventure. You could believe that Sinbad, a fantasy character, would fight with a skeleton. I made eight more drawings and took it around Hollywood, but nobody was interested. I took it to Edward Small. I took it to George Pal. It wasn't until I made three or four films, very cheap films, with Charles Schneer that it came about. I knew *7TH VOYAGE* would cost more than the budgets we had for those other pictures, so I had to redesign it to do it in a less extravagant way than I'd planned. We saved money by going to Spain and using the Alhambra for a background and all the exotic locations we could find that hadn't been over-photographed. You can't keep using Malibu Beach for a lost island. Television uses it enough!"

*THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD* (1958) was an extraordinary success and was followed by *THE 3 WORLDS OF GULLIVER* (1960) and *MYSTERIOUS ISLAND* (1961). Harryhausen returned to tales of epic adventure (and dueling skeletons!) in *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS* (1963). That same year saw the release of *FIRST MEN IN THE MOON*. There followed a three-year hiatus, which was ended with *ONE MILLION YEARS, B.C.* (1966), starring Raquel Welch in the pose that launched a million posters (which she still markets today). A quasi-remake of *ONE MILLION B.C.*, the 1940 Hal Roach film that featured Victor Mature, Lon Chaney Jr., and Carole Landis, it was produced by Hammer Films. "It was their 100th anniversary. They'd made 100 films and they wanted to be a little more elaborate, so we got a bigger budget than they were prepared to put out. We

went to the Canary Islands and used all the wonderful volcanic areas there for the backgrounds."

Dinosaurs continued to rule the earth in *THE VALLEY OF GWANGI* (1969) and, almost 20 years after his *7TH VOYAGE*, Sinbad returned (albeit with different actors each time) in *THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD* (1974) and *SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER* (1979). For *GOLDEN VOYAGE*, Harryhausen raised sword fighting to a new level of sophistication, as Sinbad and his crew faced off against an animated six-armed statue of the goddess Kali. For this sequence, in order to get the right movements for the live actors, Harryhausen tied three men together. "They were stunt men. We tied them together one behind the other, so we'd have six arms. They were a rather grotesque sight on the set. We rehearsed it dozens of times and did it in counts like a ballet. Then there came a time when the stunt men were not there and the actor still had to go through the same motions. Then I had to animate Kali in place of the three stunt men. It got quite complicated."

In 1981, Harryhausen released his final and most ambitious project. *CLASH OF THE TITANS* boasted a cast of international renown, including Laurence Olivier, Maggie Smith, Ursula Andress, Burgess Meredith, Claire Bloom, and a then up-and-coming Harry Hamlin. Harryhausen worked with larger scale models than usual and the film displays the most complicated work of his career, reflected primarily in his renderings of Pegasus, last of the winged horses, and the deadly, serpent-coiffed Medusa. "We wanted to build just one model of Medusa. We had to put great detail into it, so that when we photographed a closeup of her face and it's three feet high on the screen, we'd have the detail there. We didn't want to make another great big head, because they never quite look the same. We didn't have the money for it, either. It wasn't easy. I colored the snakes different colors—some yellow, some green, some black, some purple—so that it would help guide it, but if the phone rang and I answered and came back, I'd say, 'Oh, God,

*Continued on page 44*



# Mysterious Island

by John Brunas

If ever there was a compelling reason to invest in a deluxe home theater system, it's to enjoy the classic fantasy films of Ray Harryhausen. With the possible exception of the original theatrical experience, no other medium . . . not even 16mm, I dare say . . . affords you the opportunity to analyze and fully appreciate the incredible skill this great artist invested in his special-effects work. Thanks to the miracle of laserdiscs, aficionados of Harryhausen's special brand of screen magic can dissect and study individual effects sequences while savoring the lustrous quality of 35mm.

The Columbia Pictures production of Charles H. Schneer's MYSTERIOUS ISLAND holds a sentimental place in the hearts of the pushing-50 crowd. Released to theaters in December 1961, right on the brink of the Christmas holiday school break, MYSTERIOUS ISLAND was the kind of old-fashioned adventure movie 12-year-olds thrived on. It offered up a full plate of cinematic thrills: colorful, exotic locales; a breathtaking hot air balloon flight; giant, man-eating beasts; a pirate attack; undersea perils; an erupting volcano . . . and, to top it off, a memorable Bernard Herrmann score that captures the adventurous spirit and majestic sweep of the tale.

Based on the 1874 Jules Verne novel, *L'Île Mystérieuse*, a sequel to the author's 1869 masterpiece, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, MYSTERIOUS ISLAND has been

adapted for the screen no less than nine times. Other than the Schneer/Harryhausen film, the best-known version is the elaborately mounted but ultimately silly 1929 MGM spectacle starring Lionel Barrymore. There was also a serialized version of the Verne story, produced by Columbia Pictures in 1951, with Richard "Rocky Jones" Crane as the nominal lead.

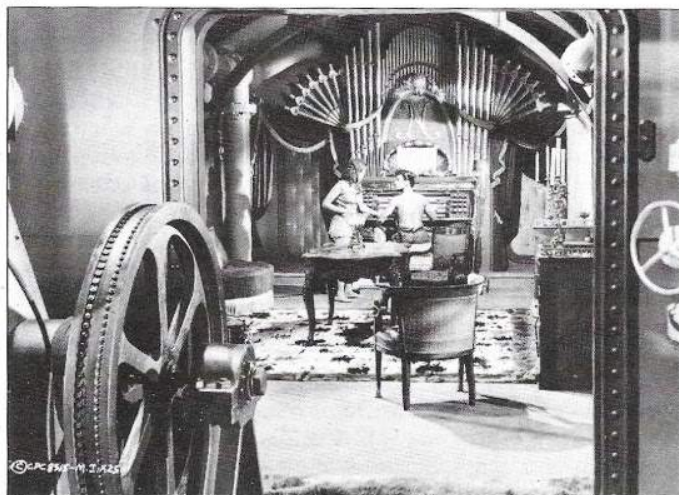
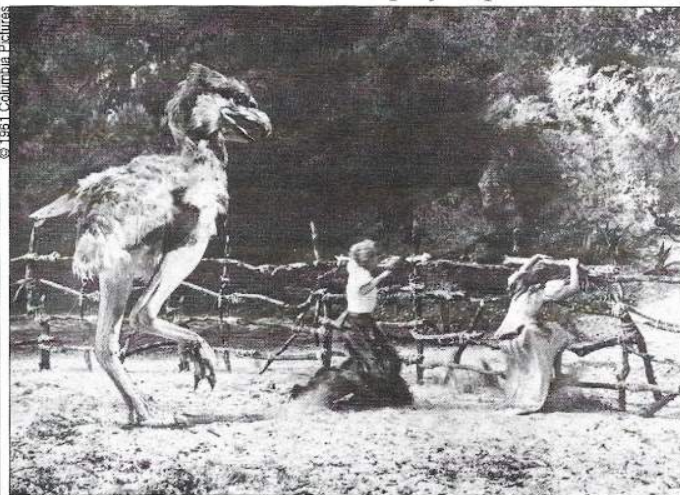
Bryan Foy had planned to produce his own version of MYSTERIOUS ISLAND in 1955 to capitalize on the success of Walt Disney's *20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA* (1954), but never got it off the ground. Charles H. Schneer resuscitated the project in 1960, and commissioned screenwriters John Prebble and Daniel Ullman to revamp the original Crane Wilbur script, altering its initial conception considerably to make optimum use of Harryhausen's Superdynamation process. At first, the production team and the writers had planned on the island being prehistoric in nature; this idea was eventually scrapped, although remnants of the prehistoric elements remained in the shooting script.

Blacklisted Hollywood director Cy Endfield, living in London at the time, was brought on board to handle the live-action sequences. The cast, composed of a mix of British and American players, included Michael Craig, Joan Greenwood, Gary Merrill, Michael Callan, and Herbert Lom as Captain Nemo.

Set at the time of the Civil War, during the Siege of Richmond, the story plunges us head-long into the action. A courageous band of Union soldiers escape from prison and steal a hot-air balloon. The winds carry them across the American continent and out over the Pacific, where they crash off the coast of an uncharted South Sea Island. Joined by several other castaways, the hardy group wages a battle for survival against the island's outsized wildlife. The beasts, they soon learn, are the creation of the presumed dead Captain Nemo, creator of the submarine Nautilus, who is obsessed with the idea of eradicating warfare from mankind's existence. By creating giant flora and fauna, starvation, one of the great causes of war, would be virtually eliminated. As

*Continued on page 44*

**LEFT:** No matter what they may say, now, kids back in 1961 thought Joan Greenwood and Beth Rogan were being menaced by a gigantic baby chicken, not a prehistoric bird. (The original script called for the MYSTERIOUS ISLAND to be inhabited by creatures from the dawn of time.) **RIGHT:** Rogan and Michael Callan take time out from island terrors to play Captain Nemo's organ.





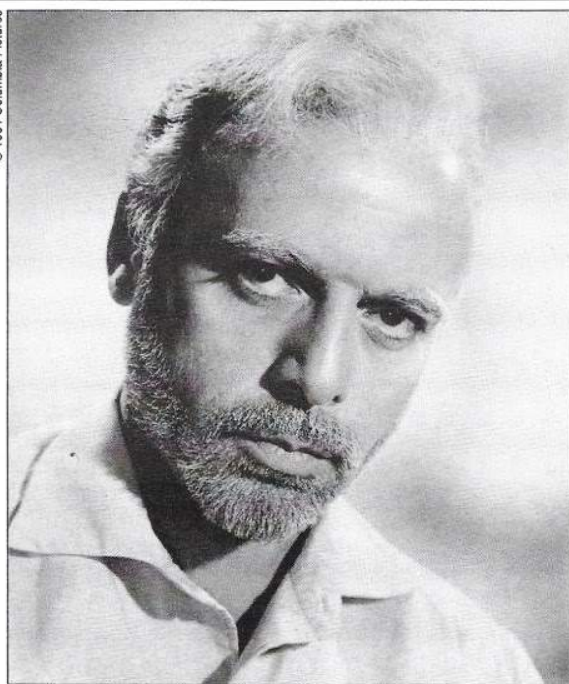
## MYSTERIOUS ISLAND

*Continued from page 43*

the minutes of the clock tick away, Nemo and the castaways struggle against time to escape from the island before a volcanic eruption ends their lives and destroys the captain's achievements.

Released twice before on laser (once in a pricey CAV edition), MYSTERIOUS ISLAND has been given the red carpet treatment by Columbia TriStar. Presented as part of their Ray Harryhausen Signature Collection (which also includes 1963's JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS and a deluxe widescreen letterboxed edition of 1963's FIRST MEN IN THE MOON, the program includes such welcome extras as the spirited original theatrical trailer, a gallery of publicity materials and lobby cards, and, best of all, an interesting discourse on the making of the film and the execution of the special visual effects (replete with preproduction sketches and on-the-set shots) by Harryhausen himself.

© 1991 Columbia Pictures



Herbert Lom as Captain Nemo

Except for the usual, acceptable number of scratches and speckles, the pictorial quality is superb. The colors are crisp and vibrant, especially in those scenes set on the sun-drenched island. The exotic animal life is captured in a palette of brilliant hues. The underwater sequences, which rate high marks with this reviewer, are beautifully rendered in icy shades of blue and aqua. Those who wish to savor Herrmann's wonderful score and the exciting mix of sound effects minus the dialogue may do so by isolating the track.

In light of the recent advances made in computer-generated special effects, the art of model animation is rapidly becoming a lost art. But as long as the work of Ray Harryhausen, Willis O'Brien, Jim Danforth, and other masters of this craft are preserved on film, video, or laserdisc for the enjoyment of future generations, their achievements will not be forgotten.



## RAY HARRYHAUSEN

*Continued from page 42*

was that snake going forward or backward? Was his tail going up or down? That's why I always liked to work alone, because if you talk to somebody, if someone innocently asks you a question, right away your mind goes to him and you forget what you're doing. In every picture except CLASH OF THE TITANS, I've worked alone and done all the animation myself."

That solitary artistry is self-evident in a body of work spanning 15 feature films. The name Ray Harryhausen is synonymous with Special Effects Master. While today's action-driven marketplace releases wave after wave of T2's and ID4's with effects that are pretty spectacular, these are most often just "speshulefex" designed to jolt you out of your seat. The special effects that Ray Harryhausen created make you pause and wonder at the beauty of a horse in flight or the mystery of a ship's figurehead that, under a wizard's spell, tears itself from the prow to do battle with its crew. These are very special effects. These are the legacy of Ray Harryhausen.

By 1991, the abandoned Academy Award category of Engineering Effects had expanded to awards for Sound, Makeup, Visual Effects, and Sound Effects Editing. Nominees that year included such F/X laden hits as BACKDRAFT, HOOK, STAR TREK VI, and the winner in all four categories: TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY. The Academy also designated that its intermittently-bestowed Gordon E. Sawyer Award for "lifetime achievement in scientific or technical fields" be presented to Ray Harryhausen. Consistent with what has become an embarrassing and demeaning policy on most award shows, the millions of Oscar-night viewers saw only a glimpse of videotape of Ray receiving this "less-

er" award from lifetime friend Ray Bradbury, coupled with a brief montage of career highlights while Tom Hanks ad-libbed in voiceover.

Ever the gentleman, Ray took no slight. "It was fun. I enjoyed getting it. I'm happy. It wouldn't have changed my life if I'd gotten one before that, I think. It does change actor's lives and director's lives, because they're before the camera—but technicians, that's different."

Reflecting on the differences between effects filmmaking now and then, Harryhausen says: "Today, the picture is all cast and done and then they hire a special-effects department, but we didn't work that way at all. We couldn't, because it wasn't economical. I was always involved right from the beginning, even choosing the story or submitting a story I wrote myself. I'd write 20-page outlines and then we'd get a professional writer to collaborate and make them suitable for a screenplay. Mainly I started with a visual, because this is a visual medium and we're stressing the visual. For example, for 7th VOYAGE OF SINBAD, I made eight big drawings showing highlights that I thought would be impressive on the screen and then the writers tied them all together. So there was Charles Schnee and the writer and myself. We'd have many sweatbox sessions where the writer had written a treatment and we'd tear it apart and try to build. Everyone contributed ideas. Those story sessions were very hard. And not to belittle the director's role—I don't want that impression to be given—but we had to do it in this way; it wasn't a director's picture. They had to be all laid out in advance, and the director's role in our forum was to get as believable performance as you can out of the actors. Many times we even started with a sec-

*Continued on page 96*



# The Children of Kong

by Edmund G. Bansak

There we were, the children of the 1950s, leaving our fingerprints upon the world as we knew it. Amid the paranoia of the Red Scare and the rising tides of civil unrest, most of us were too busy to notice anything out of the ordinary in the adult world. We were preoccupied by more important matters—TV, comic books, rock 'n' roll, monster movies—all of which were, invariably, under adult attack. Decrying these and sundry other “unhealthy” juvenile interests, the purveyors of decency managed, in 1954, to ban our horror comics, but there was little they could do to curb our all-encompassing fascination with monsters—especially when some of our favorites came to us courtesy of the wonderful world of science.

Born in 1950, I was not yet five when I was profoundly affected by KING KONG's debut on New York's MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE (WOR-TV, channel 9). Taking its lead from movie theaters, MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE ran the same film for the entire week (two shows nightly and continuous matinees during the weekend), so I had the opportunity to fall under the spell of KONG sever-

al times during its initial New York run. Only later would I realize that my obsession was not an isolated phenomenon, that there were countless others like me who would watch the film over and over again, always recapturing some of the exhilaration of that magical first time.

This beloved 1933 RKO release became part of our young lives, certain scenes of it showing up—usually with self-produced “additional footage”—in our play and in our dreams. Leaving Kong and his prehistoric island companions to our imaginations, we played the human heroes and reenacted favorite scenes from the film in our back yards, sometimes even journeying to secret places, whatever small bits of wilderness we could find in our neighborhoods to serve as appropriate Skull Island settings.

I learned to read using the *TV Guide* as my primer, poring over it weekly in the desperate hope that WOR-TV (RKO's flagship station) would someday replay the film. For me, the image of Kong seemed to lord over the TV station, ready to turn RKO's beeping radio tower into a crumpled mass of twisted steel. My patience and



## Who's Hidden in Hollywood's Closet?

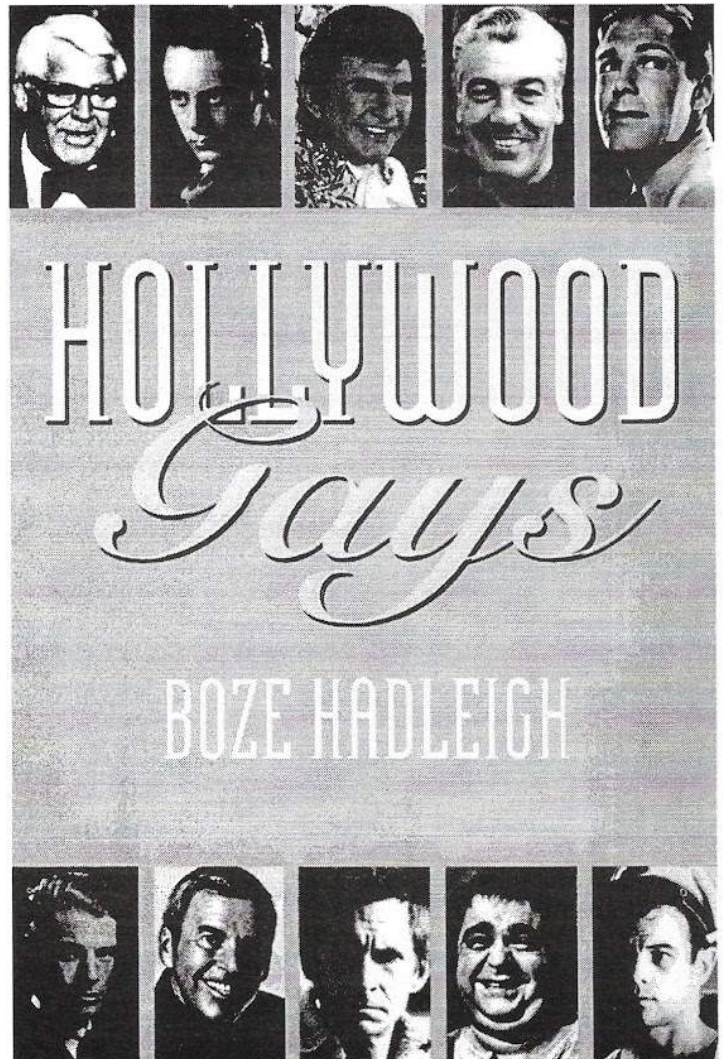
"Hollywood, with its dozens of gay stars, its hundreds of gays in positions of creative and executive power . . . prefers to reside in one huge, beautifully appointed celluloid closet. Or a gilded birdcage with a cover on it."

—*Time* magazine

Boze Hadleigh's *Hollywood Gays* helps blow the cover off that gilded cage through conversations with ten gay men of the silver (or lavender) screen . . .

This first-of-its-kind, closeup report on gay Hollywood (illustrated with 20 photos) features in-person encounters with:

- Cesar Romero, dancing partner to Lucy, Joan, Betty Grable, and dozens of others. Off screen he was Tyrone Power's lover . . .
- Paul Lynde, the Hollywood Square, was a camp classic and humorous gay icon, a closet alcoholic . . .
- James Coco, Oscar-nominated funnyman for whom dieting was a way of life and a hunk his most elusive goal . . .
- Liberace, a gay stereotype and total closet queen whose body was exhumed to prove he died of AIDS . . .
- Anthony Perkins, also a husband and father, who was haunted by Norman Bates (*Psycho*) and tried unsuccessfully to change his sexual orientation . . .
- Cary Grant, a haunted, insecure movie idol whose only lasting marriage was to his Hollywood career and false screen image . . .
- Randolph Scott, Grant's lover through various contractual marriages. Eventually he became the richest ex-actor in the world . . .



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loyalty did not go unrewarded; WOR-TV reprised the film year after year. Later, it would become their bizarre tradition to telecast it every Thanksgiving Day, in tandem with *SON OF KONG* and *MIGHTY JOE YOUNG*. Many a Thanksgiving repast was enjoyed in the company of these three towering simians.

Although Kong was always the main attraction, equally wondrous were his costars: a stegosaurus, a brontosaurus, a tyrannosaurus, a pteranodon, and other less-identifiable prehistoric reptiles. Imagine my gaping surprise when I was told that prehistoric monsters like those depicted in the film actually did exist in the distant past (a revelation which prompted me to ask my grandparents if they had ever seen any).

Dinomania spread like wildfire within our ranks. We actively sought out anything and everything on the subject; ravenous pint-sized scholars that we were, we devoured all the dino-books that could be found in the local libraries. We leafed through our own encyclopedia sets—those purchased, one volume per week, at the local A&P—on the off chance that we might find something we'd missed the last time we perused the entries on prehistoric beasts. We begged our fathers to take us to museums so that we could feast our eyes on the gigantic reconstructed skeletons of the great thunder lizards, and we pleaded with our mothers to buy a cereal we disliked just so we could get our hands on the small plastic dinosaurs included in each box. (Nabisco's unpalatable Wheat Honeys and Rice Honeys were, themselves, destined for extinction, though I'm sure their fossilized remains exist, undisturbed, in the cavernous depths of a kitchen cabinet somewhere on the continent.) Soon, a host of larger plastic replicas, these culled from toy stores and hobby shops, found their way into our bedrooms, classrooms, and backyards; on our custom-made mini-mountains of soil (replete with roads, tunnels, and hand-placed foliage), these hollow, rather delicate, dino models withstood the assaults of toy soldiers and the myriad perils of "dirt bombs"—but they could become a sorry-looking assortment after a day in a sun-baked car.

As the 1950s progressed, our preoccupation with the prehistoric did not subside. DC Comics began to run stories featuring dinosaurs (and an occasional giant ape) and we'd brave a long walk in the rain to the local mom-and-pop market to slap down our last dime for just such an issue; *Rip Hunter*, *Time Master*; *Blackhawk*; and *Challenger of the Unknown* tapped into the craze, as did many of DC's ersatz-horror grab bags, *House of Mystery*, *My Greatest Adventure*, and *House of Secrets*. *Strange Adventures* seemed to be predisposed toward pterosaurs and, issue after issue, *Star-Spangled War Stories* told tales of WWII soldiers fighting for their lives on a lost Pacific isle populated by prehistoric reptiles.

Toys, books, and comics whetted our appetites, but when we wanted to see dinosaurs brought to life in all their flesh-and-blood glory, we turned to the movies. Most of the dinosaur films we saw in the wake of *KING KONG* came directly into our living rooms via TV; for those of us in the New York television area, an uncanny number of them came to us courtesy of *MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE*. Through the 1950s and into the early 1960s our fascination with dinosaur films held no bounds; we watched them all—the good ones and the bad. As far as special effects and scientific accuracy were concerned, we were a sharper group of critics than any filmmaker had reason to expect.

Forgetting our own previous ignorance of prehistoric beasts, we found amusement in *KONG*'s Carl Denham not recognizing a stegosaurus when he saw one (referring to it merely as "a member of the dinosaur family") and we were aghast when a brontosaurus or a triceratops, herbivorous creatures both, began chowing down on performers and extras. There was no fooling us. We certainly didn't buy it when director Bert I. Gordon, in *KING DINOSAUR*, tried to pawn off an enlarged iguana as a *Tyrannosaurus Rex*; nor were we fooled by any of the other films that had live lizards standing in for dinosaurs. On the other hand, when a man-in-a-dino-suit was employed in lieu of lizards, the results were often even more risible. As far as the cinematic presentation of dinosaurs was concerned, there was simply no substitute for the painstaking stop-motion technique exemplified by the one and only *KING KONG*.

#### **KING KONG (1933)**

For the adventure of a lifetime, *KING KONG* remains unsurpassed. Steven Spielberg's *JURASSIC PARK* (1993) may be a marvelous film in its own right,

but it does not possess the mythic dimensions of its earlier counterpart. *KONG*'s universal appeal is largely dependent on scenes that accent the human element over special effects, a lesson not entirely taken to heart by the *JURASSIC* team. Because *KONG* is largely known for its Willis O'Brien animation effects, people tend to forget how much the film relied upon the suggestive approach in the mining of its chills (the stark terror of Fay Wray's isolation on the other side of the wall, the sudden silence of the natives, the banging of the gong, Kong's thunderous footfalls). The island, the village, the wall, the ceremony, the altar—such images are etched in our memories because, coming before our terrifying introduction to the title character, they accent the unknown.

Once Denham and company are off to the rescue, *KING KONG* becomes a visual/aural feast. Max Steiner's groundbreaking—at times earthshaking—musical score moves from the understated to the frenetic as we take our course through jungles and swamps, our journey





**THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS** (Below) roars his approval at (Opposite, Left to Right) **KING KONG's** battle with a pesky pteranodon over Fay Wray, Robert Armstrong and Helen Mack's discovery of a little **SON OF KONG**, and the tasty meal made of John Marston as Skull Island sinks beneath the sea.



fraught with precarious detours (an ill-fated ride on a makeshift raft, a harrowing climb up a tree, a breakneck dash over a massive log bridge). Who could forget the imagery of the great gate bursting open to reveal Kong's gigantic form, the photographers' flashbulbs and Kong's unbridled rage and subsequent escape, the terror-stricken New York populace and the hellish subway ride, and, finally, Kong's courageous—and thoroughly heartbreaking—last stand, atop the Empire State Building? No wonder this movie floored us. **KING KONG** would serve as the benchmark toward which dinosaur films would aspire for generations to come. Thanks to animator Willis O'Brien, model maker Marcel Delgado, and art director Van Nest Polglase, each dinosaur scene plays like one of Charles R. Knight's prehistoric murals come-to-life.

### **SON OF KONG (1933)**

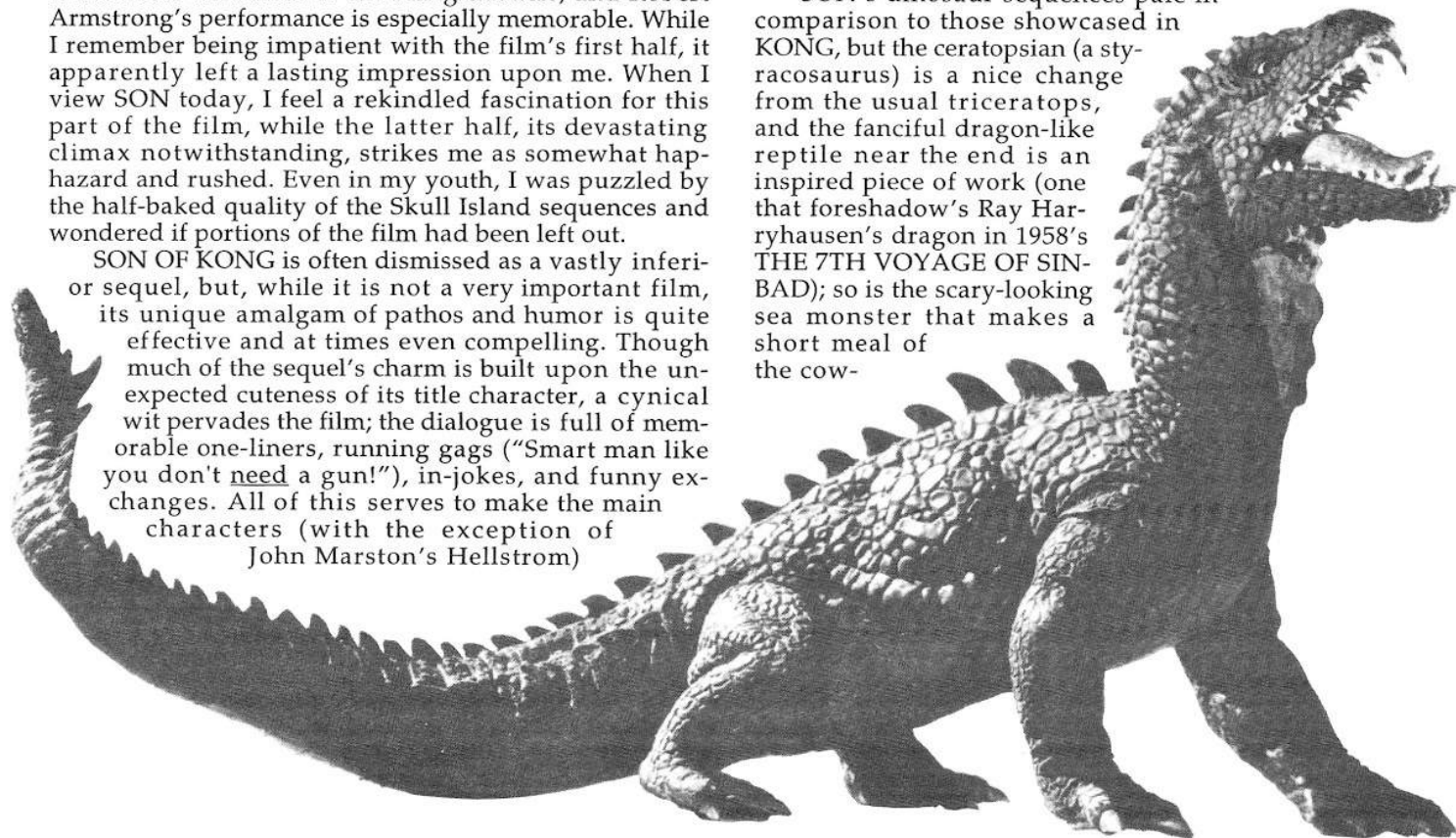
A worthy follow-up to the original? Not entirely. But this underrated quickie is most enjoyable, with moments of poignancy that belie its cut-rate budgetary origins. Although we are midway into the film before we get to Skull Island, **SON OF KONG's** first half boasts a captivating, well-acted subplot concerning a has-been circus ringmaster (Clarence Wilson), his plucky daughter (Helen Mack), and a washed-up sea captain (John Marston). As far as script, performance, and direction are concerned, the sequel's opening reels are superior to the pre-island sequences in **KONG**. Carl Denham is much more sympathetic this time around, his former bravura deflated as the result of the Kong debacle, and Robert Armstrong's performance is especially memorable. While I remember being impatient with the film's first half, it apparently left a lasting impression upon me. When I view **SON** today, I feel a rekindled fascination for this part of the film, while the latter half, its devastating climax notwithstanding, strikes me as somewhat haphazard and rushed. Even in my youth, I was puzzled by the half-baked quality of the Skull Island sequences and wondered if portions of the film had been left out.

**SON OF KONG** is often dismissed as a vastly inferior sequel, but, while it is not a very important film, its unique amalgam of pathos and humor is quite effective and at times even compelling. Though much of the sequel's charm is built upon the unexpected cuteness of its title character, a cynical wit pervades the film; the dialogue is full of memorable one-liners, running gags ("Smart man like you don't need a gun!"), in-jokes, and funny exchanges. All of this serves to make the main characters (with the exception of

John Marston's Hellstrom)

extremely likeable; when the film turns serious (the tragic death of the heroine's father, the ship mutiny, the demise of Little Kong), we feel a profound concern for the well-being of its characters. Many of us can cite **SON OF KONG** as the first motion picture to actually make us cry; the image of Little Kong's hand, holding Carl Denham above the rising tides as the entire island sinks into the ocean, is poignant indeed, especially when we notice one of the giant fingers still wearing the bandage that had come to represent the bond between our heroes and the benevolent beast. Furthermore, our knowledge of the events in the original film adds another layer of poignancy to the emotional content of **SON OF KONG**, making it one of the few sequels to actually benefit from the power of the original. It is also something of a Hollywood anomaly in that it is a genuine sequel in every sense of the word, not a mere rehash of the unbeatable original.

**SON's** dinosaur sequences pale in comparison to those showcased in **KONG**, but the ceratopsian (a stylized triceratops) is a nice change from the usual triceratops, and the fanciful dragon-like reptile near the end is an inspired piece of work (one that foreshadow's Ray Harryhausen's dragon in 1958's **THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD**); so is the scary-looking sea monster that makes a short meal of the cow-







ardly Hellstrom. The most impressive action set piece is the scrap between Little Kong and the giant bear, although this is mostly played as a romp. *SON OF KONG*'s effects sequences may not possess the dimensions of those displayed in *KONG*, but they are not at all shoddy. The matte paintings of Skull Island are gorgeous and the rowboats approach to the island, via a maze-like stone channel, never fails to capture the imagination; clearly, the locale is presented much more provocatively here than in the original. With *KONG*, I was fascinated by the beasts; with *SON*, I was fascinated by Skull Island itself. Its cataclysmic destruction is still a wonder to behold. I remember being both terrified and mesmerized by the crumbling island and the way Skull Mountain seemed to melt away beneath the feet of Denham and his simian savior. I remember being touched by Little Kong roaring at the sky, his face drenched, as I imagined, with a mixture of rain, sea water, and tears. And I remember feeling a tremendous sense of loss upon his death. The magic blend of humor and pathos exhibited in *SON OF KONG* would be perfected in 1949's *MIGHTY JOE YOUNG*, an enjoyable Cooper/Schoedsack collaboration that, sans dinosaurs, combined elements from both Kong films.

#### ONE MILLION B. C. (1940)

Historically preposterous, but undeniably entertaining, *ONE MILLION B. C.* is the first of several films to use real reptiles (lizards, iguanas, monitors, alligators) as dinosaurs. In fact, many subsequent films recycled *ONE MILLION B. C.*'s travelling mattes and rear-projected lizards. This happened with any grade B programmer that aimed to boost ticket sales by virtue of a perfunctory, often extraneous, dinosaur scene; footage from *ONE MILLION B. C.* can be found in *TARZAN'S DESERT MYSTERY* (1943), *TWO LOST WORLDS* (1950), *JUNGLE MANHUNT* (1951), *UNTAMED WOMEN* (1952), *ROBOT MONSTER* (1953), *KING DINOSAUR* (1955), *TEENAGE CAVEMAN* (1958), and *VALLEY OF THE DRAGONS* (1961, a virtual remake). The scene in which B. C.'s protagonists (Victor Mature and Carole Landis) huddle in a foreground fissure while, above them, two "dinosaurs" (horns and back fins added for accuracy) are locked in a tumbling life-and-death struggle, is the most common piece of footage cribbed from the film, but many other scenes, particularly those from the erupting volcano sequence, were exploited by numerous quick-buck filmmakers. Although B. C.'s dinosaur sound effects

have long become a cliché, they served their purpose very effectively (though we could do without the barking iguana in the final reel). The volcano effects, including earthquakes and molten lava, are still unsurpassed; the shot of the running woman being steamrolled by the lava's flow is one of the best pieces of Hollywood magic ever filmed.

Of course, *ONE MILLION B. C.* was showcased on *MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE*, giving us kids a chance to scrutinize it nightly (if we were lucky enough) and throughout the weekend. The ingenious story, told in visual terms, held up to repeated viewing, but the dinosaur sequences wore thin very quickly (especially the endlessly belabored sequence with the barking iguana). After being in a continuous state of wonder over the animation effects in the Kong films and *MIGHTY JOE YOUNG*, we now discovered the vast difference between screen magic and screen trickery. Not surprisingly, B. C.'s "non-reptile" dino effects were never recycled in a subsequent film; the man-operated, man-sized T-Rex is ridiculous (and smartly kept off-camera as much as possible) and the less said about the baby triceratops (apparently a pig-in-dinosaur's-clothing) the better.

Fortunately, *ONE MILLION B. C.* makes up for these shortcomings in other areas. There are some marvelous sets of honeycombed caves and antediluvian forests, and these afford some splendid opportunities for dynamic crane shots and fluid camerawork, all of which add a 3D aspect to the visuals. The cast acquits itself nicely in roles that must have been a helluva lot of fun to play. Lon Chaney Jr. gives an unexpectedly good turn (here at the dawn of his horror career) as a vicious—and later pathetic—cave elder; Landis, anticipating the look of a 1960s flower child, is captivatingly lovely as Luana. Beefcake star Mature, as Tumak, is to this film what Raquel Welch is to the Hammer remake. Drawing obvious inspiration from Johnny Weissmuller's Tarzan, Mature is fine in scenes that express his savagery, as when he bolts down a meal in the cave of the Shell People, but he is entirely foolish in scenes that go for humor or poignancy, as when he buffoonishly adopts the hitherto unknown practice of laughter. Aside from an occasional lapse such as this, the film's story and scope are compelling and much better served here than they were in the 1966 remake. Although a bit heavy handed with its own sense of grandeur, the memorable Werner Heymann musical score of the original is preferable to the primitive clatter heard on the remake's soundtrack.



Don Taylor's Hammer version, *ONE MILLION YEARS B. C.*, has fine special effects (thanks to Ray Harryhausen's stop-motion animation), but the human drama has none of the power—or charm—of the original. In case you remember the remake as a film in which all the dinosaurs were animated, look again; the remake was not above the occasional use of a live reptile.

### UNKNOWN ISLAND (1948)

Of the seven New York television stations of the late 1950s, WPIX (channel 11) was the lowest rung of the ladder. It was common knowledge that WPIX scoured the bottom of the barrel for their movie fare and, though I would eventually become fond of their bargain-basement horror/sci-fi offerings, I had little hope, at the time, for any dinosaur movie that would make its television debut on WPIX. *TV Guide* in hand, I spent the week pondering the wonderful possibilities of a movie called *UNKNOWN ISLAND*, about a "voyage to an island populated by dinosaurs," but my hopes were held in check by the reality of its being a WPIX presentation.

Ten minutes into the film, I found myself growing excited over the remote possibility that, just perhaps, WPIX had turned over a new leaf. *UNKNOWN ISLAND* appeared to be well-acted, well-produced, and well-written. It almost had me fooled. Almost. The appearance of its first dinosaur—a mechanical brontosaurus possessing all the agility of one of my plastic models—soon brought me back to my senses. Little did I know that this bronto-on-wheels would prove to be the film's most convincing dinosaur specimen. Hands down, *UNKNOWN ISLAND* gets the award for the phoniest dinosaurs ever photographed by man, a distinction for which there is considerable competition.

The story, which combines elements from both *THE LOST WORLD* (1925) and *KING KONG*, concerns an expedition to an uncharted island populated by numerous dinosaurs and one giant ape. The first portion of the film, which appears to have been influenced by the late 1940s noir cycle, is unexpectedly engaging. Philip Reed (a cross between Craig Stevens and Gene Rayburn) plays an opportunist who spearheads the expedition, hoping to bring back a dinosaur or two. He drags his pretty wife (Virginia Grey, looking every bit the femme fatale) into his plan and exploits her "powers of persuasion" in procuring a fearless sea captain (Barton MacLane) for the trip. Also on hand is a sailor (Richard Denning) plagued by alcoholic nightmares of his previous visit to the uncharted isle. En route, there are stirrings of mutiny (a la *SON OF KONG*), but these are soon quelled by tough guy MacLane, who chews the scenery and, generally, steals the show. The enjoyable performances by the four principals keep the first one-third of the film on an even keel; there's an obvious love triangle in the works as husband neglects wife and Denning sobers up (a little too easily) to become the film's take-charge cocky hero. Of

course, alcoholism and love triangles are curious elements for a film fashioned for the juvenile trade. No matter; once the dinosaurs are introduced, *UNKNOWN ISLAND* becomes unpalatable for young and old alike.

At least the shots of the brontosaurus, seen from afar, are presented with some degree of primeval atmosphere; if the dimetrodon—also on hidden wheels—is funny-looking, at least it's not a live reptile with a fin attached to its back. But what can one say on behalf of the oafish tyrannosaurs? These sorry creations, looking as if they were on the very verge of extinction, must be seen to be believed. Imagine a drab-colored, slightly less-realistic version of TV's Barney and you begin to get the idea. The man-operated T-Rex costumes have oversized puppet-like wagging heads with lopsided jaws (and two rows of rubbery teeth); their boxy, amorphous bodies come fully equipped with two tiny immobile arms, a pair of stovepipe legs, and a thick, lifeless tail. If their cries seem familiar, that's because they come to us courtesy of *ONE MILLION B. C.* The battle between two tyrannosaurs is a wonder to behold; the cumbersome out-



**ONE MILLION B. C.**

fits are so unwieldy that the life-and-death combat is reduced to nothing more than head bops and flapping jaws. Later we see a half-dozen or more of these creations lumbering about in a field, rocking back and forth from one foot to the other, a task they perform with great regularity, motor activity not being a high priority for the costume department. To make matters worse, no attempt is made to make any of these creatures appear enlarged—no tiny custom-built trees or landmark props, no special effects with diminutive humans occupying the same frame—so we never believe that the tyrannosaurs are any taller than the men who occupy their costumes. When we catch our first glimpse of the shaggy ape, we have absolutely no idea of its proportions; it looks like a man-sized gorilla

standing among some bushes. Only when it battles a tyrannosaur do we become cognizant of its enlarged status. This poorly edited struggle is a little more lively (at least the gorilla suit has some freedom of movement) but no less risible; most of the action consists of blurry close-ups of their ugly, blood-smattered mugs as each take its turn attempting to swallow the camera. The gorilla wins by biting a flap of costume material from the tyrannosaur's neck and throwing his opponent over a cliff. The T-Rex suit falling off the towering escarpment is the most realistic shot in the film; it's a pity that this wasn't done with all the prehistoric costumes and props before production began. Without the dinosaurs, *UNKNOWN ISLAND* might have been an engaging B feature.

### LOST CONTINENT (1951)

*LOST CONTINENT* was the second dinosaur film I ever saw (*KING KONG* being the first) and, although its many shortcomings are evident to me now, I loved it at the time. Despite some lame plot elements involving a lost rocket, a radioactive mountain, and a possi-



ble Russian spy, I still think it's a great concept: a mountain-climbing film during the first half (this portion no doubt inspired by the success of RKO's 1950 *THE WHITE TOWER*) and a dinosaur film the second.

Although I knew it wasn't in the same league with *KONG*, *CONTINENT* never ceased to fascinate me. I was in awe of the plane's forced landing and the interior view of jungle foliage whipping past the windshield, breaking the descent. I was no less taken by the concept of a primeval paradise existing on the top of a stone mountain high enough to reach the clouds. In addition, I liked the chemistry of the group, played by Cesar Romero, John Hoyt, Hugh Beaumont, Chick Chandler, and, yes, even the moronic Sid Melton (who talks to his parachute, addressing "her" as "baby," over the entire trip). Today I can see that the film's mountain climbing sequences are fairly pedestrian (the principals pass by the same mountain scenery—shot at different angles—again and again) and that the group chemistry was built on little more than hackneyed dialogue, but I was less discerning at the time. Some parts of the film, however, still hold up, especially the plane crash and Whit Bissell's horrifying backward descent, during a mountain-climbing scene, into a blanket of clouds; equally fine is the earthquake that ends the film. Though I never could understand how they got down the mountain so fast—amid the incredible flow of impressively staged falling rubble—I still find the sequence exciting, especially those shots of the surviving characters jumping over widening fissures in the earth.

If *LOST CONTINENT*'s dinosaur effects are not as good as I remembered them, at least they were achieved via stop-motion animation; compared to the work of Willis O'Brien, Ray Harryhausen, and Jim Danforth, *CONTINENT*'s animation sequences may be second-rate, but even second-rate animation is preferable to live lizards or ludicrous costumes. Because the film's modest budget prohibited much interaction between the actors and the effects, most of the time the saurians do little more than appear in the distance. The two exceptions to this—a brontosaurus treeing Hugh Beaumont (the idea obviously cribbed from *KONG*) and a horned ceratopsian goring Sid Melton—are not convincingly executed. Except for the brief appearance of an animated pterodactyl and a single flashing glimpse of an enlarged live reptile posing as a dinosaur, the plateau's population of dinosaurs seems to consist exclusively of brontosaurus and ceratopsians. In spite of their obvious limitations, the dinosaur sequences are nicely complemented by imaginatively-designed miniature sets and provocative-looking mattes. The shot of the battling ceratopsians is fascinating, the beautiful-but-preposterous matte painting revealing our mountain plateau to be an impossibly vast area, one surrounded by towering buttes, like those in Utah's Monument Valley.

While the Production Code vehemently discouraged graphic gore in the films of the '30s, '40s, and '50s, the

censors always seemed to take a surprisingly lenient stand toward scenes of dinosaur carnage. *LOST CONTINENT*, like most films of its ilk, was generous with its dollops of dino gore. During Beaumont's rescue, bullets make a bloody mess of the bronto's head, while Romero absurdly comments, "The thing's got more armor than a tank!" The life-and-death contest between the two ceratopsians is so relentlessly gruesome that it borders on the grotesque (accounting for its wholly appropriate inclusion, as young Anthony's favorite "program" in *THE TWILIGHT ZONE*'s adaptation of Jerome Bixby's "It's a Good Life"). Say what you will about the film's shortcomings, at least *LOST CONTINENT* has enough integrity to offer its own special effects, when it could just as easily have been one more film to plunder footage from *ONE MILLION B. C.*

### **THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS (1953)**

Twenty years after its release, *KING KONG* was still wielding influence in Hollywood. The picture was re-released in the summer of 1952 (some three years prior to its *MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE* premiere), this time sharing the bill with the 1943 Val Lewton/Jacques Tourneur production, *THE LEOPARD MAN*. It was the dawn of Hollywood's great 1950s sci-fi cycle and the extensive radio and TV promotion of this magical double-bill paid off in spades; it grossed \$3 million, more than three times the figure made by *KING KONG* upon its first release. *KONG*'s tremendous box-office was instrumental in the genesis of *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS*, the first of Eugene Lourie's trio of dinosaur films. (*THE GIANT BEHEMOTH* and *GORG0* will be covered in next issue's conclusion to this article.)

*BEAST* was such a massive hit that I wish I had been old enough to have seen it in a movie house during its initial run.

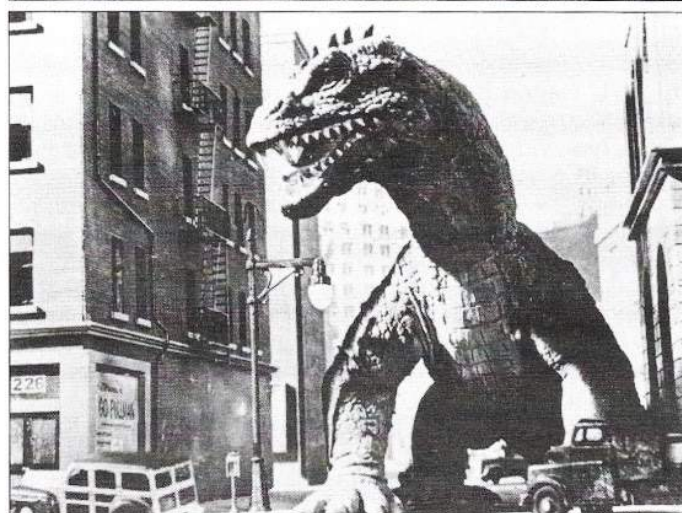


**UNKNOWN ISLAND**

Its premiere on *MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE* was rather belated, having already been preceded by later dinosaur-on-the-rampage films—*GODZILLA* (1956), *RODAN* (1957), *THE GIANT BEHEMOTH* (1959)—all of which owed their respective debts to a formula established by *BEAST*. Hence, by the time I saw the film, it had lost its novelty appeal. I found myself growing weary of long stretches of dull exposition, as flatly drawn characters explored the obvious from one lifeless scene to another. When the title beast (a rhedosaurus) is on screen, the film is wonderful, the best of its kind; but when we spend time with the performers (in museums or hospital rooms or offices or boats), we feel we're just biding time, treading water, waiting for the main attraction: the marvelous Ray Harryhausen stop-motion effects. *BEAST*'s shortcomings are similar to those of the next three Harryhausen films—*IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA* (1955), *EARTH VS. THE FLYING SAUCERS* (1956), and *20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH* (1957)—all of which are blessed by wonderful effects but plagued by static exposition and drab characters.



**BELOW:** The Three Stoogesaurus! Moe, Larry, and Curly pose for the cameraman in *UNKNOWN ISLAND* (1948). **CENTER:** Cesar Romero takes aim at a brontosaurus with an extremely rubbery neck in the entertaining *LOST CONTINENT* (1951). **BOTTOM:** Ray Harryhausen set the 1950s dino invasion rolling with the rhedosaur (no such beast existed) in *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS*. Also pictured is Cecil Kellaway (inside the rhedosaur). **BOTTOM RIGHT:** *KING KONG VS. GODZILLA* (1963).



*BEAST*'s first reel, set in the Arctic, seems to be a deliberate attempt to imitate *THE THING* (1951), especially when we see actor Kenneth Tobey gazing across the frozen wasteland. Any similarity between the two films, however, is strictly superficial. *THE THING* demonstrated that a verbose film need not be tedious, a lesson that was, apparently, not taken to heart by the makers of *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS*. Paul Christian is less-than-engaging as the film's bland hero and Paula Raymond isn't much better as his romantic interest. Cecil Kellaway does a nice turn as the grandfatherly scientist (the prototype that Edmund Gwenn would perfect in 1954's *THEM!*), but Kenneth Tobey is entirely wasted in a two-dimensional semi-reprise of his formerly three-dimensional role, as a military officer, in *THE THING*.

These shortcomings aside, the special effects are superb and the direction of the action sequences, especially the mob scenes, is genuinely inspired. We are given a few brief glimpses of the creature (a shape in an Arctic blizzard, a silhouette destroying a lighthouse, a distorted image seen from the window of a diving bell) before it clambers out of the Atlantic Ocean and sets foot upon Manhattan's waterfront district. And, quite suddenly, the film comes alive. The shots of the rhedosaurus, walking in and out of shadow as it heads in the direction of Times Square, are surprisingly convincing. The beast strolls down Wall Street, stepping on cars, kicking over lampposts, eating policemen, demolishing buildings, leaving a trail of death and destruction. I love the low-angle tracking shots of the creature and the way the New York skyline passes behind it, making us feel as though we were watching some kind of wondrous perambulating parade float. Some atmospheric night scenes follow, including a spooky sequence showing soldiers collapsing on the city streets as a result of contamination from the viral puddles of blood from the wounded creature. The Coney Island climax, in which the beast is mortally wounded by expert marksman Lee Van Cleef, attempts to generate some extra thrills by having its heroes trapped on a burning roller coaster, but I've always found the film's ending to be something of a let-down. Let's face it, Kong's Empire State Building stunt was a hard act to follow.

Next: Godzilla—King of the Monsters?



Photofest



# Crimson Chronicles

by Forrest J Ackerman

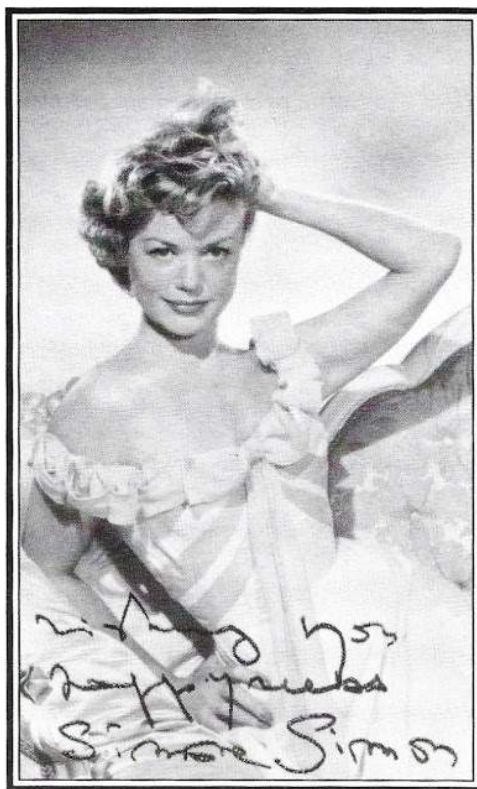


**S**IMONE SIMON. She had a reputation of being a scarlet starlet in her day. Her day was over 60 years ago, when she came from France and began making movies in America. I stood in line in the rain to become instantly enamored of her in *GIRLS DORMITORY* and some years later we fantafilm fans enshrined her in our hearts with her roles in *THE CAT PEOPLE*, *CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE*, and *ALL THAT MONEY CAN BUY* (aka *THE DEVIL AND DANIEL WEBSTER*), wherein she portrayed the siren Bella Dee. In 1944, Walt Daugherty, "Photographer of the Mon-Stars," did me an immortal favor by arranging for GI FJA to visit the set of Robert (*THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL*) Wise's *CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE*, and during a break in the filming I was taken to Simone's little on-the-set dressing room and there had the thrill of standing next to every red-blooded fan's feline fantasy.

I guess at 80, I'm safe in revealing a long-kept secret from my WW2 meeting with Simone at age 28. As I stood behind the seated siren and bent over her shoulder to show her some fotos of herself (to some of which she exclaimed delightedly, "Oh, I've never seen these!"), the dress she was wearing was *tres decollete*, I don't believe she was wearing a bra, and I got a glorious, unforgettable Peeping Tom peek at her, er, twin peaks. (Should I give back my Good Conduct medal?) The dear lady must be about my age, is still alive and living in Paris with failing eyesight (and a devoted young lover), and I recently wrote her a letter of appreciation, just to let her know she was not forgotten by one fervent fan. I didn't ask for anything; I just wanted her to know her youthful simulacrum was alive in my memory. So I was thrilled to receive this handwritten response, which I share with you:

"Never have I had such a nice, complimentary, and warm letter. I am very grateful to you."

And she sent me this foto, which I am also pleased to share with you. Simone, you're right up there in my heart with the late Marlene Die-



Simone Simon

trich and Anna Sten and (she disappeared during the war in 1944) Sari Maritza, whom I introduced you to lasttime in my column.

\*\*\*

It will be past history by the time you read this, but at the presenttime I am beginning to be visited by sci-fi fans arriving from around the United States and world for the 54th World Science Fiction Convention—of which I've attended 53. The first arrivees were a delegation from Japan, including Convention Guests of

Honor Mr. and Mrs. Takumi Shibano and their two daughters, one of whom played my piano while the other, with the voice of an angel (I've nicknamed her "Tensi") melodiously sang Japanese songs to me. Takumi brought me news of Tetsu Yano, the first Japanfan who visited me in 1953 and saw me presented with the first Hugo at that year's worldcon, and news of the famous author of "Submergence of Japan," filmed as *JAPAN SINKS*. The next visitors were actifans Richard and Nicki Lynch from Maryland; he's determined to see my autobiography published. And as I transfer this information to my computer, there's a "Countess Dracula" touring the house and a fan from Baltimore and one from Long Island and a guy and gal from N'Orleans. I'm expecting Ron (*Graven Images*) Borst for lunch at any moment—come to think of it, I was up till one in the morning with him, together with Brian (publisher of *Lon of 1000 Faces!*) Forbes and Kevin J. Burns, masterminder of the TV specials about Karloff, Lugosi, and Chaney Jr. I can see I have a plenty busy time ahead of me in the next few days before the Worldcon, where I'll be presenting the annual Big Heart Award to Dik Daniels, a local fan who has taken thousands of snapshots of fans and pros over the years and made presents of them to the photographers; I'll be giving a slide show of "Wonders of the Ackermansion," appearing on a panel turning back the clock a half century to early conventions (with participants Walt Daugherty, Len Moffatt, Julie Schwartz, and several other survivors), introducing one of my early cameos in *THE TIME TRAVELERS*, being present on Labor Day itself for the world premiere of the filmic incarnation of the comicbook character I created 27 years ago on my flight to Rio for a 10-day fantasy



film festival—VAMPIRELLA, etc. etc. I understand I'm in the running for two retroactive Hugos from the year 1946; in the next CRIMSON CHRONICLES I'll let you know the winners.

I'd just left a note on the door that I was out to lunch and would be back in about an hour when a carload of four fans turned up. I asked them if they were in the mood for food and if they'd care to accompany Ron Borst and me to our favorite barbeque beanery in Hollywood. Just as we were about to take off, a taxi pulled up and disgorged still another hungry fan. It's a couple of hours later, now, and the visitors have picked their eyeballs up off the floor and poked them back in their sockets and these were their comments in the Guest Book:

"A unique, most amazing home."—Elsa Chen, Arlington, MA.

"It is good to know that you can spend a lifetime for fun."—Carlton Gordon, NYC.

"I'm sorry my Lady Becky was not with me. She thinks I have a huge collection."—Alan Roberts, Springfield, OR. (I, FJA, had a paternal grandmother, who was a twin, named Becky.)

"The lost ark, the holy grail . . . of all SF."—John L. Flynn, Woodlawn, MD.



Vampirella!

"I'm in the presence of sacred relics so I write these words while on my knees. If your sense of wonder is not stimulated here you are inert matter."—Lenny J. Provenzano, Huntsville, NY.

I wonder if there'd be any kind of a market for a sheaf of Xopys (Xeroxed copies) quoting some of the more interesting comments I've re-

ceived in the last 40 years or so since Bela Lugosi wrote one word: "Amazed!" Drop me a postcard if you'd be a candidate. If enough are interested, it would probably cost a couple of bucks a xopy to cover my time. FJA, 2495 Glendower Ave., Hollywood, CA 90027-1110.

The mail has come and in the midst of it I find an audiotape sent me by my sci-fi pal, director John (INNOCENT BLOOD) Landis, who has cameoed me in six of his films so far since his hit when he was 22, SCHLOCK: THE BANANA MONSTER. I've just taken time out to listen to the most astonishing radio drama since Orson Welles' legendary WAR OF THE WORLDS. It's an adaptation with a British background of ID4J called "INDEPENDENCE DAY UK and I've listened to it in amazement. I almost enjoyed it more than the movie, even without the incredible special effects. An absolutely superb rendition with ear-blasting sound effects and completely complimentary musical score. In the classic Lon Chaney Sr. silent film THE UNKNOWN, Lon had two thumbs on one hand. If he'd come back to 1996 as a radio critic, I'm sure he'd have given both thumbs up to this stellar production! Thanxamillion, John. As the late Vincent Price might have said, "You're a love."

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# The Music Behind

## PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE

by Paul Mandell

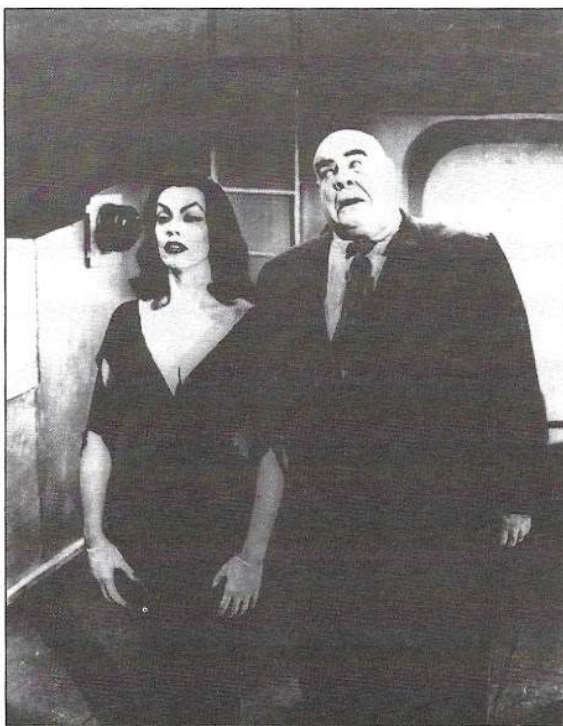
*Now for the first time, we are bringing you the full story of what happened on that fateful day . . .*

—Criswell

Ed Wood Jr.'s 1959 reverse-classic PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE may not be the Worst Film of All Time (THE CREEPING TERROR, THE ATOMIC BRAIN, and THE BEAST OF YUCCA FLATS make it look like a noir masterwork by comparison), but in its total conviction, strained seriousness, wacky syntax, absurd non sequiturs, and deliriously inept direction (through Wood's bullhorn), it was certainly the most entertaining slice of '50s kitsch. (Hey, the guy was making a statement!) Those who caught its initial airdate on CHILLER THEATER in 1961 found it a hallucinatory experience; today, it's a "really cool" retro-hip phenomenon. What made the film work at all was the underscore, a compilation of pastorals, stingers, and horror themes pre-written by England's top composers of library music.

For decades, PLAN 9's music credits have been shrouded in mystery. Misinformation was legion. A cue sheet was never filed with ASCAP or BMI, which made the identification process a real bear. A bootleg LP issued in 1980 by a nameless outfit (a vinyl transcription of the entire movie) had bogus back-cover liner notes by "Ed Wood, December 1978" with Wood congratulating music supervisor Gordon Zahler for "his wonderful PLAN 9 score." Zahler didn't write a note. In 1989, Performance Records came out with a PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE CD calling itself "the original motion picture soundtrack," which, like the LP, was a transfer of the edited optical track. Great for parties, but it didn't showcase the music. (As Wood might have put it: "Soundtrack. That would indicate sound.") In his 1992 Wood biography *Nightmare of Ecstasy*, Rudolph Grey insisted that PLAN 9's main title theme was actually Russian composer Alexander Mosolov's "Iron Foundry," prompting a New Jersey post-grad student to write her thesis examining the relationship of Mosolov's music to Wood's imagery. Regrettably, that too was fiction.

Truth be known, the "score" of PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE consisted of cues taken from Britain's Impress Mood Music Library, published by Inter-Art under various copyrights spanning 1955-1961. The library was formed by entrepreneur Gordon Barnes with the backing of a rich postcard manufacturer. The name Impress was invented by music editor Richard Taylor, later a director—the "Imp" stood for Inter-Art Music Publishers. To supplement PLAN 9's score, a handful of suspense cues were rented from the Video Moods Music Library owned and operated by Mort Ascher and his son Everett in New York.



Vampira and Tor Johnson gained immortality in more ways than one when they rose from the dead in Edward D. Wood Jr.'s PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE.

The subject of library music as underscore for motion pictures and television has hardly been broached; from 1950 to 1965, filmed and live TV shows relied on it almost exclusively, and dozens of low-budget movies used ersatz scores derived from these music services.

The big boom happened in 1952, when TV went through the roof. Shows made on lean budgets needed fresh background music, from ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN to MR. ED and beyond. Music brokers such as David Chudnow assembled monumental libraries by recruiting B-movie composers, having them write action, suspense, and comedy themes under phony names, and recording them on the cheap in Mexico and France. Practically overnight, such English companies as Chappell, KPM, Paxton, and Francis Day & Hunter put leading composers under contract—libraries burst on the scene with modern, often brilliant quality. Scores could be tailor-made by music editors; if

they didn't like the cloth or the cut of the material, the library supplied a dozen alternatives. Yet throughout the Fabulous Fifties, library music was a pariah in the eyes of the American Federation of Musicians under dictator James Petrillo, and also by the Musician's Union in England, a situation which impelled producers in both countries to flee to Belgium, Germany, and Italy to have this music performed and recorded. But that's another story requiring a separate text.





**LEFT:** The innovative *PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE* sported the world's first airplane cockpit and shower curtain ensemble. **RIGHT:** "Big boy" Tor is about to become "dead, murdered" ... and someone's responsible!

When Ed Wood wrapped production of *PLAN 9* at Quality Studios in 1956, he hired Gordon Zahler to access the music tracks. Zahler, a paraplegic, was a bottom-rung music packager who operated under the banner of General Music Corporation. His father, Lee Zahler, was a music director and legitimate composer of countless Mascot and Republic serials in the '30s and '40s. After Lee's death in 1947, Gordon grabbed his father's cues, along with other music taken from acetates of old movies, and turned it into a rental library, which was illegal but filled a need. An example was the *WILD BILL HICKOCK* show in 1953; the main title and interior cues were lifted from these acetates. Like Ed Wood, Zahler was never known to have played with a full deck. Often he'd pick cues from foreign libraries and assign his own cue numbers and titles to them for ASCAP and BMI royalties, which was also illegal. Various sources have told me that he and such other packagers as Raoul Kraushaar and David Gordon often did not operate above board, and the lack of any *PLAN 9* cue sheet therefore comes as no surprise. Zahler's physical condition tended to dissuade anyone from hauling him into court.

For *PLAN 9*, Zahler chose the Impress and Video Moods libraries, which he accessed from Emil Ascher Inc., the exclusive U.S. distributor. Both libraries were new, which made them attractive. Impress was by far the better of the two: not only were the composers first-rate, the cues had the luxury of being performed by a large orchestra in Stuttgart, Germany. Ironically, these sterling sessions were driven by the union ban on library performance in England.

In a sense, this was "absolute music" written like classical composition. There was no scene-spotting, no visuals to rely on. The library would request x-amount of mood pieces and the composers would write them generically, left to their own devices and imagination. The finished cues ran anywhere from 10 seconds to four minutes and were catalogued by genre: dramatic, suspense, light and heavy activity, neutral, romance, regal, pastoral. Also written were volumes of links and bridges. Some libraries catalogued the musical keys, which made it easy for editors to tie an E-flat action cue to a compatible bridge.

Proprietary transcription discs were made, usually on heavy shellac at 78 rpm, and supplied to producers for audition. Though Ampex tape evolved in the late '40s,

some libraries, especially the British ones, often recorded their masters on shellac or vinyl. Ornate catalogs were their pride and joy, and unlike the "library music" that festered in earlier decades—poorly composed and lifted from optical tracks and acetates—this stuff had to be good in order to sell. A mechanical license allowed guys like Wood to track it in for a pittance. Usage fees were cheap—libraries charged per needle drop or by package rate. *PLAN 9*'s music tab probably didn't exceed \$350, and whether or not Wood actually coughed up this dough is anyone's guess.

From the discs, Zahler transferred his picks onto magnetic tape and assembled a music and effects track. Credit should be given to him for keenly deciding which cues would best enhance Wood's tacky continuity. Zahler reduced most of the cues to partials; composite cues were made to fit the action. Most of the tracking consisted of straight in's and out's. For one scene of Lugosi's double and Vampira stalking Tor Johnson, Zahler created a sloppy overlap of two partial cues ("River Patrol" and "Dark Traffic"), which seized the moment but destroyed the dynamics of the music. The consequence of pictures like *PLAN 9* was the cheapening effect they had on the library underscore, cloaking their orchestral values, which were often spectacular. Only when the music stands alone with full fidelity can those dynamics be appreciated. The new Retrosonic CD of *PLAN 9*'s remastered tracks remedies this dilemma. The CD follows Zahler's continuity in dovetailing these two particular cues, but betters the moment with a straight edit instead of an awkward mid-cue mix.

Trevor Duncan's name probably doesn't chime with familiarity in America, but he was by far the best of the Impress composer group, a no-nonsense, self-taught musician with equal flair for pastiche, horror moods, romantic scenes, and—like Holst—powerful visionary suites. David Lean approached him to do *LAWRENCE OF ARABIA*, but he turned it down. Born Leonard Trebilco, he worked as a sound engineer for the BBC from 1947 to 1954, where he demanded and received full say over microphone placement and balance during orchestral sessions. His contempt for the BBC producers resulted in a move to Boosey & Hawkes in 1952, a venerable publishing house that gave him *carte blanche* on library music writing. Embarrassingly, schlock producer Cy Roth tracked some of his most regal cues into the





LEFT: Bela Lugosi's stand-in makes a ferocious attack on some lawn furniture in one of PLAN 9's more thrilling moments. RIGHT: Unlike Zsa Zsa, John "Bunny" Breckinridge (seated) was a true Queen of Outer Space.

1952 atrocity FIRE MAIDENS FROM OUTER SPACE. (Unlike PLAN 9, FIRE MAIDENS was just plain boring, a cardinal sin for any movie.) Gordon Barnes lured him to Inter-Art in 1955 to get the Impress library started. Trebilco's name change was ostensibly inspired by Inter-Art's street address—16 Duncan Lane.

Duncan's jaunty, militaristic crime cue "Grip of the Law" was used as PLAN 9's Main Title theme and was looped twice during the cemetery chase. (When Nikita Khrushchev came to town in 1960, CBS News used this piece under him to point up his threatening image.) Two sections of his "Dark Traffic" (a cue written in six parts) played under Inspector Clay's murder by Vampira, and his nightmarish "The Web Tightens" blared ominously as Wood's toy saucers flew over Hollywood street scenes. Duncan wrote PLAN 9's love music as well, and his hair-raising, unrelenting "Lynch Fever" (which in spots sounds very James Bondish) culminated in a primal musical scream under the patio shoot-out of Lugosi's double.

Still active and living in a castle near the Bridgewater countryside, Duncan told me of his *modus operandi* in composing the "wild stuff."

"I usually found some movement of harmonies that seemed right for the atmosphere I was seeking. I'd jot down ideas and modify them at the piano, then play it over with much too much pedal so that the harmonies are all overlapping. Over that I'd sing some outrageous trumpet or horn part, searching it out, not recognizing what it was immediately. So these were 'primal screams.' For me it was all cinema and exciting fun. I still have the ability to improvise endlessly; I can never understand why musicians cannot. It comes in handy in church when the bride and groom get stuck in the vestry—the temptation not to be dramatic and indulge in a few bloodcurdling dissonances is always there!

"The Stuttgart session men were eager for the work and played magnificently," Duncan remembers. "I always asked for jazz brass. The lead trumpet was Horst Fischer, a genius player. All the string and woodwind were symphonic players in suits—all stiff and proper. The gulf between the jazz faction and the straight players was palpable! Franz Biehler, who spoke perfect English, was the fixer. The Stuttgart sessions were the best I had ever known in terms of satisfaction at the results. I regret the boxiness of the acoustic; no reverb devices

were available back then." (The Retrosonic remaster has taken measures to surmount these deficiencies.)

Trevor's name appears on the end credits of Tim Burton's ED WOOD (1994), since Touchstone-Disney had to cough up the usage fee for "Grip of the Law" when a snippet of PLAN 9 rolled. He was probably compensated more for that moment than 40 years' worth of PLAN 9 playdates. The Brits know this cue better as the main title of the SCOTLAND YARD series. Duncan also wrote music for the QUATERMASS AND THE PIT television serial.

Like Duncan, Van Phillips was a versatile composer whose frenzied, pounding action themes ("The Tyrant," "Manhunt") were tracked in almost full-cue under scenes of the stock footage army convoy attacking the saucers. Phillips' "Homicide Squad" was played partially when Tor Johnson and the others huddled into a police car; the full cue sizzled during the climactic punchout between Gregory Walcott and Dudley Manlove's stunt double. In total contrast were Phillips' haunting laments ("Mystic," "Remorse") used for PLAN 9's two funeral scenes.

From the Video Moods library came a handful of cues composed by Franz Mahl and Ward Sills (real names George Chase and Wladimir Selinsky). Chase also went under the name of Michael Reynolds. His "Dark of the Moon" (the master of which contains a minor nick) played under the scene of the real Bela Lugosi cavorting in the daylight graveyard with outstretched cape. The cue was also used in a HONEYMOONERS episode when Ralph Kramden snoozed in front of his rabbit-eared television set. "Mystic Night" underscored Inspector Clay's prowling in the cemetery. "Hypertension" set the mood for Lugosi entering Paula's house. "Vigil" thumped when Kelton climbed into Clay's unearthed grave. Sills' "Hourglass" turned the Tor Johnson/Vampira zombie walk into an eerie ballet mechanic. (The piece was recorded in different keys and tempos as part of a metronomic time sequence for the library.) These Mahl/Sills cues enjoyed relentless play in the 1955-56 seasons of ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN, when the show's producer Whitney Ellsworth decided to replace the British FDH and Paxton mood libraries used in the two previous years.

The Impress ballroom number "In Your Arms" by Glenn Miller wannabe John O'Notes (sic) served as radio



music behind Greg Walcott's spiel on flying saucers and big army brass. Jazz artist Steve Race (the emcee of England's version of NAME THAT TUNE) wrote a cache of suspense themes and stingers for Impress. His ear-splitting "Dry Throat" played under the scene of Clay throttling Kelton and abducting Paula from the car. Bruce Campbell wrote the cues used for the grave-digging murders and the droll lament "Desolate Village" for Lugosi moping in the garden over his dead wife. (Campbell composed for a huge number of libraries, including CBS; his meandering pastoral kicked off the classic TWILIGHT ZONE episode, "The Hitchhiker.")

James Stevens' theremin-like flutes in his cue "Operations Room" underscored the scene of the cop and colonel entering the saucer's gondola. Wolf Droysen composed the ethereal "Uneasy Sleep" for Eros' pensive cosmic lament at the spaceship window. Another Droysen cue, "Generator House," provided a haunting mood-set for the question, "Eros, do we have to kill them?" BBC conductor Gilbert Vinter, who brought a new dynamic to scoring for the British Brass Band, wrote the stately "Towards Adventure" for Criswell's manic, ranting monologues.

It's difficult to imagine the reaction of these eminent composers upon discovering their work as underscore for such tacky films as PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE. They toiled in anonymity, writing music worthy of much greater ends. Trevor Duncan, with his wry humor, waxes philosophical about all this. "Ed Wood. Oh, well. One is grateful for the pennies."

In the mid-1970's, Inter-Art went out of business. The Impress library was picked up via a quitclaim by Weinberger Ltd. in England, which still licenses the cues when the need arises. Copyrights were renewed by the composers themselves when the original Inter-Art

registrations expired. Video Moods folded in the '80s when its proprietor, Everett Ascher, got caught up in a legal harangue and went bankrupt. Copyrights on the Video Moods were not renewed.

Gordon Zahler continued to track low-budget, mostly forgettable sci-fi/horror flicks from his wheelchair in the '60s with the assistance of music editor Igo Kantor. Using the Weinberger Library and tracks bootlegged from composer Leith Stevens, Zahler did Ed Wood's NIGHT OF THE GHOULS (unreleased until 1983), FIRST SPACESHIP ON VENUS (a 1960 German import re-tracked almost entirely with cues by Hans Salter), THE HUMAN DUPLICATORS (1965) and MUTINY IN OUTER SPACE (both 1965), and THE NAVY VS. THE NIGHT MONSTERS (1966), with Mamie Van Doren. Like Wood, Zahler died in obscurity in the '70s.

As one watches the strange light emanating from Criswell's platinum pompadour, as he hammers his rhetoric with unblinking, mascaraed, booze-glazed eyes, only one of his manic predictions rings true: "Events such as these will affect you in the future!" Turns out he was right on the money: the event, PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE, has become a *cause célèbre*. Ed Wood, spurned by Hollywood in life, revolves in his grave with a jug of Imperial whiskey, while Disney pours millions into his biopic. Go figure. Let us punish the guilty; let us reward the innocent.

PLAN 9 endures, like an intriguing fungus festering on an oak. Forty years without slumbering. God help us all.



Paul Mandell is a New York-based writer, historian, and producer of Retrosonic Records. This article originally appeared in Film Score Monthly.

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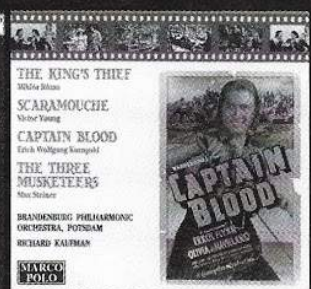
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# Our Man on Baker Street

## by David Stuart Davies

### *That Ol' Gang of Mine*

What are the Baker Street gang up to, now? I refer to those talented individuals who worked on Granada's SHERLOCK HOLMES series. Producer Michael Cox and Rosalie Williams (Mrs. Hudson) are now in retirement. David Burke, the first Dr. Watson, has just finished playing in the spooky play THE WOMAN IN BLACK in London's West End and is now looking for work. The other Watson, Edward Hardwicke, has just finished filming a Ruth Rendell mystery for television and, as I write, he is about to guest in a medical series for the BBC called DANGERFIELD. In the meantime, he has been recording the Holmes stories for Tangled Web Audio Tapes. "I'm not comfortable doing these," he told me. "I'm okay as Watson, but once I have to speak as Holmes I'm ill at ease. It's funny that, when I do Holmes, it's Basil Rathbone's voice I hear in my head, not Jeremy's."

Writer Jeremy Paul is scripting a large-scale production of THE SCARLET PIMPERNEL for the BBC and fellow scribe Trevor Bowen is involved in tricky negotiations to write a Victorian detective series. "Can't say more than that at present, David." What, no titles, no hints? "No." Negotiations must be very tricky. I wonder if they'll let us see it?

Rosalie Williams as Mrs. Hudson



And finally, producer June Wyndham Davies. Well, she is . . . not returning calls!

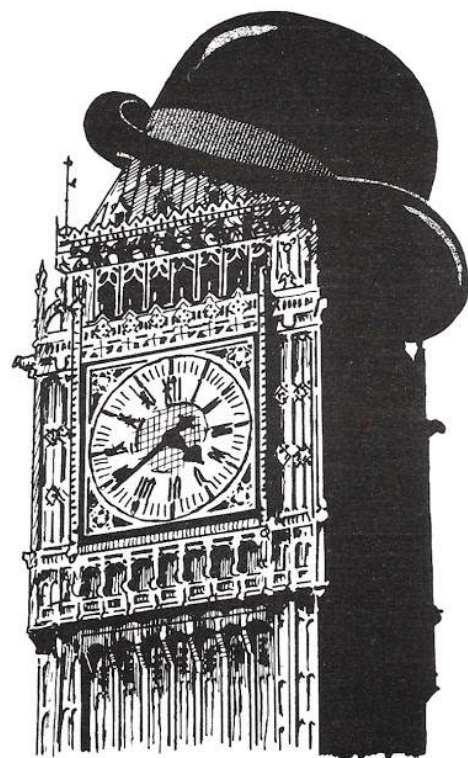
### *Stale Cracker?*

There was a certain amount of criticism about the recent BAFTA awarded to Robbie Coltrane for Best Actor in a television drama, CRACKER. (BAFTA stands for The Academy of British Film and Television Awards—the U.K. version of the Oscars.) It was the third year running that this gong went to Coltrane and many thought that (a) after one presentation, an actor should not be eligible for the same award for the same part; (b) he was getting stale in the role anyway; and (c) there were many other performances and performers more worthy of the award.

The final series of CRACKER (and so it is being described by Granada) was shown in Britain earlier this year and it proved to be a disappointment. In their desperate need to shock the viewer with violence and to top the previous shows with blood and gore, they over egged their pudding. And when that happens you get a very eggy, yucky pudding. However, we haven't seen the last of giant hulk Contrane and his character Fitz. We are promised a final special feature-length episode shot in Hong Kong.

Isn't that the way with television people? When they get a real hit on their hands, they make a special and set it in some exotic location, far away from the setting that is partly responsible for the appeal of the show. The rough, gritty streets of Manchester, teeming with knife-wielding rapists (or so the show would have us believe), is essentially one of the characters in the CRACKER set-up. So why dump it for Hong Kong?

The producers of MORSE did the same thing. In the two least successful shows in this series, they carted Inspector Morse off to Australia (PROMISED LAND) and Italy (THE DEATH OF SELF). It would seem that they failed to appreciate that the leafy suburbs of Oxford and the honey-colored stones of its college buildings, along with the fascinat-



ing, rather cloistered University life, was a significant part of the show's appeal. Take a detective out of his unique environment and you reduce him to the level of any run-of-the-mill gumshoe, investigator, or policeman. Philip Marlowe needs the mean streets, Sherlock Holmes needs foggy London thoroughfares, and Maigret needs garlic-reeking Parisian pavements.

### *The Morse the Merrier*

And talking of MORSE . . . I was talking to Morse quite recently—or rather to his creator. Colin Dexter and I, along with a whole blooding of crime writers (my own newly-coined collective noun), were in London for the opening of a specialist crime fiction bookshop in London. The shop is called Crime in Store and is to be found in the Covent Garden area of the city. Dexter is one of the backers of the shop and he was in fine form during the opening—and so he should be. This is a good year for him. He has a new Morse novel out in September, *Death is Now My Neighbor*, in which he finally reveals the secret of Morse's first name. We know already that it begins with an "E," but the morose Morse has always refused to say what it is. The author told me that it is given as the last word in the new novel. My money is on "Evelyn."

Continued on page 98





Well . . . so far, safari.

—ROAD TO ZANZIBAR

Since the earliest days of cinema, the jungle locale has been an ideal setting used by filmmakers to stimulate our passion for action, adventure, and mystery. With its many inevitable dangers, ranging from cold-blooded beasts to sweltering hot temperatures, the "green hell" has also been the logical place to scrutinize our inherent fears and sundry appetites.

A smoldering jungle can be as provocative as it is formidable, and some of the more exotic locations helped pave the way for several of the silver screen's very first nude scenes. During Hollywood's so-called Golden Age, a time when people didn't frolic in skimpy bathing suits, and fan magazines didn't reveal anything too exciting in the flesh department, a jungle backdrop was practically the only venue in which a performer could bare his or her physical assets. The costumes, such as they were, permitted leading ladies to show off their sleek and sexy figures (in an age before liposuction), while the male of the species could flaunt his well-developed pecs and biceps. Not surprisingly, you could always find plenty of erotic overtones in even the most innocuous jungle yarn.

The jungle could also echo with laughter. In her enjoyable autobiography, *My Side of the Road* (Prentice Hall, 1980), actress Dorothy Lamour recalled an implied nude scene in *ROAD TO ZANZIBAR* (1941), the second of the seven riotous road pictures she made with Bing Crosby and Bob Hope, that made it past the censors. The script had called for two leopards to steal Lamour's clothes, thereby forcing her to "cover up with whatever's near at hand." After the picture's release, the cameramen of Hollywood voted the actress one of the "Ten Best Undressed Women" for this one little scene. Only

by Steve Randisi

# JUNGLE GEMS

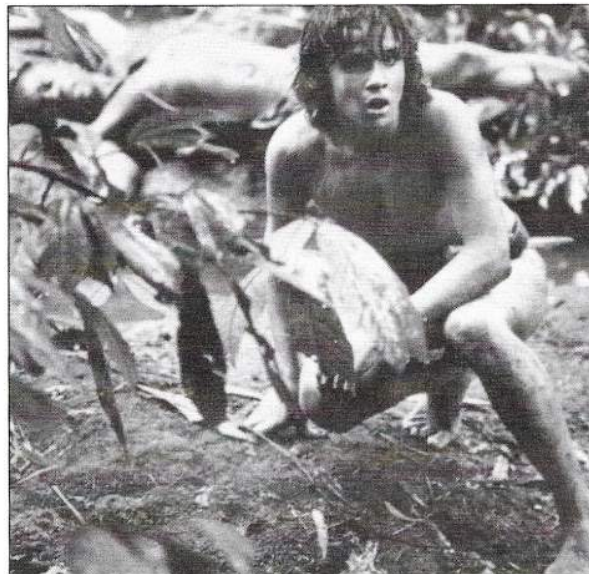
in a movieland jungle could anyone get away with such a gag in the innocent 1940s.

Mention the word jungle, and most people recall images of a muscular, loin-clothed guy swinging on a vine. Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan of the Apes*, the story of a baby who had been stranded in the jungle, was first published in 1912. In 1918, First National Pictures adapted the story into a silent film under the same title, with Elmo Lincoln as the Lord of the Jungle. Lincoln's characterization, with his virile, long-haired look, created a mild sensation with the moviegoing public. Several more features and serials were produced with Lincoln and various other actors playing the title role, and these were also mildly successful. Still, it was not until 1932, when MGM released *TARZAN, THE APE MAN* starring swimming champ Johnny Weissmuller as Tarzan and Maureen O'Sullivan as Jane, that the character skyrocketed to incredible heights of popularity.

Louis B. Mayer, MGM's mighty mogul, was quite impressed with the finished product, and he insisted that extra time and care be spent to ensure success with the sequel, *TARZAN AND HIS MATE* (1934). This second Metro effort, considered by many to be the best







**PREVIOUS PAGE:** Bob Hope and Bing Crosby were two birds in non-gilded cannibal cages in *ROAD TO ZANZIBAR* (1941), one of the funniest safaris ever put on film. **THIS PAGE:** Three young actors played the role before an orphaned child grew up to become Christopher Lambert (below) as *GREYSTOKE* (1984).

Tarzan picture produced up to that time, featured a sensual underwater swimming romp with a nude Jane (in truth, O'Sullivan's double) and her brawny, seminude ape-man. In fact, there was actually a brief glimpse of Jane's breast in one scene, and this celebrated footage, originally censored from the final cut, has now been fully restored in the newer prints.

When she was dressed, Maureen O'Sullivan gave *TARZAN AND HIS MATE* a delectable erotic ambience with a daring two-piece costume that she was never to wear again. The Hollywood Production Code of 1934 established guidelines that prohibited sexual innuendo in motion pictures. Consequently, by the time

*TARZAN ESCAPES* (1936) found its way into theaters, Jane's tantalizing jungle garb had been altered into something more akin to a tacky housedress. To compensate for this letdown, the third Weissmuller effort contained more exciting battle scenes with wild beasts and reptiles. Tarzan's warfare with monstrous bats, however, was reportedly deleted because it was believed to be too frightening for youngsters.

By the mid 1940s, an increasingly weighty Weissmuller had swung over to RKO Radio Pictures, where he continued to delight the Saturday matinee pack. With him was Johnny Sheffield as Boy, who had joined the franchise in MGM's *TARZAN FINDS A SON!* (1939).







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**LEFT:** The original, unused makeup design for Bela Lugosi as the Sayer of the Law in the classic *ISLAND OF LOST SOULS* (1933). **RIGHT:** In *THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU* (1977), Burt Lancaster was the crazed doctor and Michael York an unwilling victim of his experiments.

However, none of the standardized films of this period could ever match the freshness and sensuality of the early MGM efforts. One title, *TARZAN AND THE LEOPARD WOMAN* (1946), stands out because of the appearance of exotic Acquanetta, who added zest to the proceedings as the High Priestess Lea. By this time, Brenda Joyce had taken on the role of Jane.

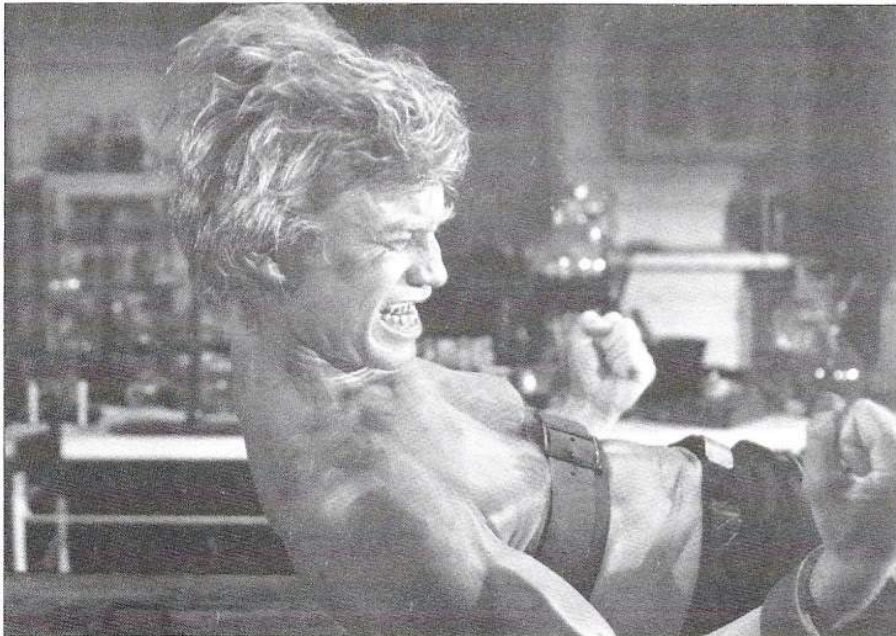
After Weissmuller had outgrown his loincloth by several sizes, he starred in Columbia's low-budget *JUNGLE JIM* series from 1948 to 1955. Sheffield also continued to brave the perils of the jungle and an expanding waistline; from 1949 to 1955, he starred in a dozen Monogram (later Allied Artists) features based on Roy Rockwood's "Bomba, The Jungle Boy" books. Both series were rerun endlessly during the early days

of television when stations were in constant need of inexpensive programming.

Another jungle icon frequently showcased on celluloid was the alluring Ayesha, popularly known as *She Who Must Be Obeyed*, created by H. Rider Haggard. The adventures of the beautiful amazon goddess had been established in a series of novels and silent films (Betty Blythe starred in the 1917 production) before RKO produced its version, *SHE* (1935), with Helen Gahagan in the title role opposite Randolph Scott and Nigel Bruce. For unknown reasons, the studio switched the locale from Africa to the barren Arctic, but the film still exuded the usual blend of action and romance. Like Tarzan, the

*Continued on page 66*

**LEFT:** Staid Britisher Michael York unleashes his bestial fury on an unplanned visit to *THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU* (1977). **RIGHT:** One of the manimals of the most recent *ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU* (1996).



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# ZOMBIES ON BROADWAY

by Bob Madison

**W**ally Brown and Alan Carney, RKO's anemic Abbott and Costello impersonators, strut their stuff in this mostly forgettable jungle caper concerning zombies, gangsters, and a knife-throwing nightclub-singing femme fatale.

It sounds better than it is.

Brown and Carney are public relations men working for gangster Sheldon Leonard. Leonard is about to open a new nightclub with a zombie theme (!), and his PR men promise a real "live" zombie for opening night. When questions of fraud are heard on the radio airwaves, the two comics depart for the island of San Sebastian (lifted lock, stock, and Sir Lancelot from Val Lewton's 1943 classic *I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE*), there to meet Dr. Paul Renalt (Bela Lugosi) and secure the genuine article.

Of course, one of the funnymen is "zombie-ized" and brought back to New York City for his nightclub debut.

*ZOMBIES ON BROADWAY* is remembered today mainly as yet another Bela Lugosi vehicle. It should not be: Lugosi has very little chance to display his acting wares, his total screen time amounting to a little less than 10 minutes. This does little to carry the film's sometimes interminable 68-minute running time.

The film is no better (and often worse) than many of the horror-mystery comedies that preceded *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN* (1948). But *ZOMBIES'* title card bills Lugosi prominently, just after Brown and Carney, and viewers are forgiven any outrage they feel at so little Lugosi screen time—or the fact that, all too often, the screen time has little pay-off. One of Lugosi's major scenes involves him being outwitted by a monkey hiding in a chest of dresser drawers after having stolen a syringe of zombie fluid. Lugosi, a fine dramatic actor but not a talented farceur, makes the least of this bit.

It is nearly impossible to reconcile the fact that *ZOMBIES ON BROADWAY*, directed in a flat fashion by Gordon Douglas and written (probably in one day during a bad hangover) by Lawrence Kimble, was made by the studio that also produced *KING KONG* and the glorious Astaire and Rogers musicals. There is, however, one funny bit: our heroes get on the ship back home by pre-

tending to be zombies with blank faces and arms outstretched, scaring the natives. They are followed by the monkey, who sneaks on board mimicking the same undead gait.

While *ZOMBIES ON BROADWAY* may have boasted the budget of a solid B film and the resources of a major studio, Lugosi fans would do better to return to his poverty row work at Monogram. While not as slick as *ZOMBIES*, the Monogram films were smart enough to showcase Lugosi in all his histrionic glory. The Lugosi fan who catches *ZOMBIES* on tape or late-night television is bound to come away disappointed. The monkey has better shtick than he does!

Fans of jungle adventure films will remember that the screen's favorite European menace did more than his fair share of trekking through the bush. Lugosi also crept through the jungles of Haiti in the classic *WHITE ZOMBIE* (1932), cavorted in the tropics with Martin and Lewis clones Duke Mitchell and Sammy Petrillo in *BELA LUGOSI MEETS A BROOKLYN GORILLA* (1952), and planned world domination in a "forsaken jungle hell" in Edward D. Wood's *BRIDE OF THE MONSTER* (1955). All are better than *ZOMBIES ON BROADWAY*.







Dorothy Lamour did for sarongs what Betty Grable did for swim suits and Lana Turner did for sweaters in a tremendously popular series of lush South Sea adventures for Paramount.

## JUNGLE GEMS

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great Ayesha would emerge again and again in various remakes and sequels. She was revived by Ursula Andress in the Hammer production, *SHE* (1965, with John Richardson and Peter Cushing in the Scott and Bruce roles), and by Olinka Berova in Hammer's hollow followup, *THE VENGEANCE OF SHE* (1967).

While virtually every studio made at least one or two significant contributions to the genre, RKO stood out in the early to mid '30s with several outstanding accomplishments. In 1932, the studio released *THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME*, based on the short story by Richard Connell. The villain, Count Zaroff (played by Leslie Banks) was a character inhabiting a remote island on which he conducted his rather bizarre avocation: hunting down people, then mounting and displaying their heads! Banks did a more than adequate job in bringing this uncelebrated screen scoundrel to life. Ernest B. Shoedsack occupied the director's chair (he concurrently codirected *KING KONG* with Merian C. Cooper while making *GAME*), while Joel McCrea, Fay Wray, and Robert Armstrong headed the cast.

Without a doubt, *KING KONG* (1933) was RKO's crowning achievement of the day. A genuine masterpiece that seems to improve with age (especially with the restored footage in the reissue prints), *KONG* remains one of the most unforgettable fantasy films of all time. Who could forget the prehistoric reptiles of Skull Island? Or the climactic scene with Kong perched atop the Empire State Building, swatting airplanes with a screaming Fay Wray clutched in his fist?

The studio had such a huge hit on its hands that a sequel was quickly assembled the same year. *SON OF KONG* (1933) featured a smaller-scale ape and was produced on a smaller-scale budget. Kong's kid was no

chip off the old block; he didn't even tear off the heroine's clothes and sniff his paws as his predecessor had done. But he did battle an amazing assortment of reptilian creatures during the East Indies segment of the film, thereby preserving some of the old magic. Several critics held the belief that, after the first *KONG* outing, the movie going public wouldn't accept another giant ape epic. However, in 1949 a little film called *MIGHTY JOE YOUNG*—with special effects by Kong wizard Willis O'Brien and newcomer Ray Harryhausen—came along to prove them wrong.

Although the dinosaur scenes in *KING KONG* were chillingly realistic, they were hardly an innovation. Eight years earlier, audiences had thrilled to the sight of monster reptiles in *THE LOST WORLD* (1925), a silent feature based on the novel by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (also with effects by O'Brien). Wallace Beery headed the cast as Professor Challenger, the leader of a scientific team on a deserted island. In viewing this film today, one can readily appreciate the impact it must have had on audiences of the '20s.

Twentieth Century Fox remade *THE LOST WORLD* in 1960. This updated color version was directed by Irwin Allen and starred Claude Rains as the resourceful professor. Costar Ray Stricklyn described for *Scarlet Street* the process photography used to effectuate the giant size of the reptiles: "We were standing, as I recall, in front of a big screen where the reptiles were blown up behind us. They were actually very tiny lizards that they blew up into these monsters. It was entirely shot on that fabulous back lot, which is now, of course, Century City; so it was all done right in the studio."

Stricklyn also recalled the indomitable Claude Rains: "Sometimes I would drive him home. He didn't

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# BRIDE OF THE GORILLA

by Michael Brunas

Science fiction/horror writer Curt Siodmak has always admitted to a sibling rivalry with elder brother Robert. Their thorny relationship goes a long way toward explaining how these two headstrong German emigres managed to maintain separate careers at Universal in the 1940s—Curt as the resident horror scribe (*BLACK FRIDAY*/1940, *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*/1943), Robert as the studio's premier noir director (*PHANTOM LADY*/1944, *THE KILLERS*/1946). The rivalry ironically came full circle when Curt got his first shot at directing this minor jungle thriller in 1951. Based on his own script, titled *THE FACE IN THE WATER*, the finished film looked vaguely like the sort of movie brother Robert might have made had he been reduced to working for a grade-Z outfit such as Jack Broder Productions.

Basically a rewrite of the standard man-into-beast thriller, *BRIDE OF THE GORILLA* has the unmistakable look of a film noir, with a back-lot studio jungle substituting for dark city streets. Hints of Curt's earlier assignments for Universal and Val Lewton abound. Surprisingly, it's a far more entertaining movie than its tacky reputation would have you believe. For the most part, Robert was spared the humiliation suffered by Billy Wilder when his no-talent brother, W. Lee Wilder, took the directorial helm for such cinematic embarrassments as *THE SNOW CREATURE* and *KILLERS FROM SPACE* (both 1954).

The stage is set with a campy voiceover introduction by Lon Chaney Jr. (egregiously miscast as a police commissioner), who intones some high-minded twaddle about jungle law. With this, the film settles into a familiar, overheated noir mode, as sultry Barbara Payton dances to a Latin beat below the spinning blades of an overhead fan. The frustrated wife of an aging, unsympathetic rubber planter in South America (Paul Cavanagh), Payton keeps her attraction to the lusty plantation manager (Raymond Burr) in check until he leads her husband into the path of a poisonous snake. When the sole witness to the crime, a native housekeeper, evokes a jungle curse, the script ventures deep into Ed Wood terrain, becoming the apparent inspiration for the Wood-written *THE BRIDE AND THE BEAST* (1958), whose heroine fancies herself a ape. In this case, it's Burr who imagines himself transforming into a legendary gorilla-like creature, casting aside his bride for nightly sojourns into the wilderness.

The sexual undercurrent is well maintained in the opening reels, as Burr and Payton steal furtive glances beneath the notice of the Bible-thumping master of the house. Siodmak's dialogue is surprisingly good, except for one or two gaffes. (Payton rebukes Cavanagh's bawling out Burr for negligence in the death of a field hand with a terse "Don't fight before dinner!") In the end, though, his direction is undermined as much by his somnambulistic leading lady as it is by the inevitable monotony of his own screenplay. Siodmak cribs devices originally slated for his first-draft script of *THE WOLF MAN* (1941), which anticipated the Val Lewton approach of keeping the title beast off-camera except for its own reflection. (See, too, the "beast in the trap" scene pictured below.) But the writer was no more successful in selling Jack Broder on the idea of an unseen menace than he was with Universal, and the final cut includes overhead shots of stuntman Steve Calvert prowling through the underbrush in full gorilla costume.

*BRIDE OF THE GORILLA*'s tragic finale and general air of despair proved sadly prophetic for this particular group of players, whose personal lives became the stuff of "Hollywood Babylon." The career of hard-drinking Chaney was just sputtering along at the time; the actor was no longer Universal's top horror personality and had not yet found his niche as a Hollywood character actor. The once-dapper Tom Conway (cast here as the family doctor) was sinking fast after his successful stint in RKO's Falcon series. Sinking even lower was Barbara Payton, who couldn't parlay her bad publicity and inexpressive persona into a career. In a few years her sad, bloated image made the tabloids, which gleefully reported her arrest for prostitution in one of Hollywood's most notorious scandals.

Only Raymond Burr, always excellent in pre-Perry Mason roles, enhanced his reputation to the point that he could look back on *BRIDE OF THE GORILLA* as a bad joke. Without the absurd title and better overall handling, it needn't have been a joke at all.







LEFT: The one and only KING KONG (1933), the greatest of all jungle (including the steel jungle of New York) adventures. RIGHT: Fay Wray and Joel McCrea escape through the sets used later for KONG in THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME (1932). BELOW: Leslie Banks as Count Zaroff in THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME.

## JUNGLE GEMS

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drive. I always admired him, he was one of my favorite actors, and I finally said, 'Mr. Rains, why are you doing this picture?' He said, 'Oh! My dear boy, for the same reason you are. The money!'

As if all the natural perils of the green hell weren't enough to contend with, the mad scientist presented yet another obstacle. The concept of a diabolic doc at work in the jungle was no doubt influenced by the immensely popular horror films of the late silent and early sound era. A prime example is the stylistic ISLAND OF LOST SOULS (1933), the first film version of the classic novel *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, by H.G. Wells (1866-1946). A young couple, played by Leila Hyams and Richard Arlen, are beset by a deranged genius who turns beasts into human beings. Charles Laughton gave a brilliant performance as the doctor obsessed with developing his species of "mammals." Bela Lugosi, fresh on the heels of his success in the previous year's WHITE ZOMBIE, was equally brilliant as the beastly Sayer of the Law. The plan to mate the hero (Arlen) with the seductive and scantily clad Panther Woman (Kathleen Burke) is tame by today's standards. But in 1933, this innovation, combined with the taboo notion of man trying to emulate God, caused the film to be heavily censored, or banned altogether, in several countries.

Wells was said to have been disappointed with the picture, so one can only imagine what he might have thought of the 1977 remake, ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU, which starred Burt Lancaster in the title role, or the version with Marlon Brando.

Another evil doctor who generated good box-office returns was the bespectacled DR. CYCLOPS (1940). In this jungle fantasy, one of the few horror movies of the Golden Era made in color, a maniacal scientist (Albert Dekker) shrinks people down to mini-size when he learns that they plan to reveal his findings to the world. With its large scale sets and convincing special effects, CYCLOPS was (in its small way) one of Paramount's biggest hits of the year.

Paramount was the studio responsible for keeping the irrepressible Dorothy Lamour draped in a sarong for many of her films of the late '30s and early '40s. Be-

fore she hit the road with Hope and Crosby, Lamour sparkled in several light, romantic jungle adventures laced with songs and gentle comedy. Several of these features, including THE JUNGLE PRINCESS (1936), HER JUNGLE LOVE (1938), and TROPIC HOLIDAY (1938),

teamed her with the up and coming Ray Milland. Dottie's performances were so inspiring (and profitable) that Paramount couldn't keep her out of the jungle; the studio even dusted off old scripts and fashioned such remakes as ALOMA OF THE SOUTH SEAS (1941), which had been filmed years earlier with Warner Baxter. Another Lamour escapade, 1942's BEYOND THE BLUE HORIZON, with Richard Denning, featured a fantastic mad elephant rampage that remains unsurpassed. The footage was so exhilarating, in fact, that it later "chased" jungle boy Johnny Sheffield in Monogram's BOMBA AND THE ELEPHANT STAMPEDE (1951).

Not every jungle excursion with grade A talent was successful in terms of box office

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# MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET

by Richard Scrivani

In the endless parade of B-grade jungle/adventure/horror pictures, *THE MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET* (1942) occupies a unique corner of the coppice. Originally titled *TERROR OF THE ISLANDS*, and produced just short of a year after Universal's barnstorming Lon Chaney Jr., introductory vehicle *MAN MADE MONSTER* (1941), one gets the distinct impression that the former film's mad Dr. Rigas, had he lived, might have been inclined to spend his retirement years in the same line of work as *MARKET STREET*'s Dr. Ralph Benson—with more successful results, that is.

Both Rigas and Benson are portrayed by Lionel Atwill with the same dash of dangerous impishness, although Benson finds putting his subjects in a state of suspended animation more rewarding than creating a race of electrically-charged supermen. Once his subjects' life functions go on hold, the good doctor theorizes, they can lie in cold storage until a cure for their ills is found. Unfortunately, his first poor victim's (Hardie Albright) heart stops pumping permanently at the same time that the man's wife (Anne Nagel) and the police arrive at his door, forcing Benson to escape via the window (leaving all that expensive lab equipment lying around).

Benson assumes a new identity, books passage on a liner headed for the South Seas, swiftly becomes shipwrecked (haven't we all had days like this?), and finds himself stranded on an uncharted island in the company of several Americans (Claire Dodd, Nat Pendleton, Una Merkel, Richard Davies, and John Eldredge). Captured by the island's natives, Benson seizes an opportunity to save his own neck by pretending to raise the chief's wife from the dead (the woman has suffered a heart attack and is given a shot of adrenaline, handy in Benson's black bag). Here now is the perfect place to work: a jungle community full of superstitious primitives who now worship him as the "God of Life."

Free to work out the kinks in his theories, Benson enjoys the extra strokes to his ego and begins to treat his fellow strandeers like lab rats. All goes relatively well in Benson's little kingdom until someone really dies—an eventuality apparently never considered in the busy mind of a god—and our mad doctor burns the midnight torches trying to pull something out of that same black bag to really raise the dead. When he fails to work his miracle by dawn, the natives celebrate by roasting him alive. Using this diversion to flee for their lives, the remaining survivors spot a search-party

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**TOP:** Is it Universal's *THE MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET* or just Lionel Atwill in festive costume for one of his at-home orgies? He wouldn't be the first Hollywood actor with a beard. **CENTER:** It's just another day at the office for Lionel Atwill, one of the maddest mad docs to ever grace the silver screen. **BOTTOM:** Dr. Ralph Benson (Atwill) has just come to a shocking realization: when you set yourself up as an island god capable of raising the dead, you damn well better be able to raise the dead. Behind him lurk Al Kikume (the chief in 1937's *THE HURRICANE*) and Noble Johnson.





Bud Abbott and Lou Costello know a stinker when they see one, and, in 1942's *PARDON MY SARONG*, Lionel Atwill was definitely a stinker!

### MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET

*Continued from page 69*

plane and barely escape the pursuing savages as Dr. Benson's reign of tropical terror comes to an end.

A brisk, effective little jungle thriller directed by Joseph H. Lewis (who also directed 1941's *INVISIBLE GHOST* and 1948's *GUN CRAZY*) and associate-produced by Paul Malvern (1944's *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* and 1945's *HOUSE OF DRACULA*), the film's major drawback lies with its supporting characters. Perhaps it's not all their fault, as the dialogue they are given to deliver would make the most seasoned of actors cringe. Character actress Una Merkel is all but wasted in another of her "flaky" roles as Claire Dodd's sidekick/aunt, and Nat Pendleton, more comically effective in a film such as *BUCK PRIVATES COME HOME* (1947), is just downright annoying as a third-rate prizefighter, making us wish that Benson had chosen him for his first experiment! Claire Dodd and Richard Davies are competent and likeable, but their roles as the romantic leads are underwritten even for this kind of fare.

Everyone in the cast can't help but take a back seat to the film's star. *THE MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET* owes practically all of its appeal to Lionel Atwill. The former stage actor had been toiling on and off at Universal since the early 1930s, but *MAD DOCTOR* was the first and only feature vehicle specifically designed for him by the studio. (He may have had top billing in *MAN MADE MONSTER*, but the one being showcased was obviously Chaney.) Happy to be working after the notorious "orgy" scandal of 1940, Atwill contributed that touch of class and individuality needed to put the film over. Swaggering among the coconut palms and revelling in his new social position as god, he conveys a sort of wild delight as he orders the others around with complete impunity, putters in his makeshift thatched-hut lab, and selects his next victim (and even a pretty wife) as if he were picking out a tie. Whether he's puckishly telling his "subjects" that, "I'm wanted for murder, but there's nothing you can do about it," or trying to beat a woman out of a seat in a lifeboat, Atwill is a joy to behold.

If all of this seems somewhat familiar, it could very well be the similarity in setting as well as Benson's resemblance to another Atwill role in the popular Abbott and Costello jungle comedy *PARDON MY SARONG* (1942), released by the same studio just six months later. In that film, his Eric Varnoff differs from Ralph Benson only slightly, in that he is rather humorless and concerned mainly with the non-lofty and fairly pedestrian business of bilking the natives out of a horde of sacred jewels. Benson, on the other hand, seems to be genuinely relishing his stay on what was probably the very same island set. (Too bad Universal didn't opt for an in-joke by calling the A&C film *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET THE MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET*!)

Add Jerome Ash's dark and moody cinematography for Benson's laboratory in the opening reel, and Hans J. Salter's reliable use of music from other Universal chillers (in this case 1939's *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN*, 1940's *BLACK FRIDAY*, and *MAN MADE MONSTER*), and you have a serviceable little melodrama that entertains throughout its 61-minute running time.



### JUNGLE GEMS

*Continued from page 68*

and critical acceptance. *GREEN HELL* (1940), for instance, had devil-may-care Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and the exquisite Joan Bennett searching for hidden treasure in the Amazon. Unfortunately, they were attacked by both the natives and the critics! Even with such a top-notch director as Universal horror master James Whale (1931's *FRANKENSTEIN*), and a cast including Vincent Price, Alan Hale, and George Sanders (as the villain), the finished product resembled an average, but enjoyable, programmer. Fairbanks still chuckles when the film is mentioned: "I remember that it was delightful to work with Joan, but I don't remember a whole lot about the plot; and it's probably just as well because *GREEN HELL* was voted the worst movie of 1940 by the students at Harvard!" One wonders if the Harvard students had seen any of the other films that year (*DEVIL BAT*, perhaps?) before according this film such an unwarranted distinction.

Big-budgeted blockbusters and programmers alike were often introduced in movie houses by that veritable segment known as a serial. Some of the more memorable cliffhangers include *THE JUNGLE MYSTERY* (1932) with Tom Tyler; *JUNGLE GIRL* (1940) with Frances Gifford; and *PERILS OF NYOKA* (1942), which starred former model Kay Aldridge (occasionally billed as the Serial Queen) as Nyoka Gordon.

*NYOKA* was a particularly exciting serial, because the heroine seemed to be in a bind (literally) in practically every frame of film. The snakes and gorillas she encountered were the least of her problems. When Nyoka wasn't suspended over a bubbling cauldron, she invariably had to confront the possibility of being captured, crushed, tied-up, sliced up, or tortured in some way by a bevy of bad guys. It was certainly enough action to keep Saturday matinee audiences (and bondage enthusiasts) enthralled throughout all 15 chapters.

By the 1950s, the jungle motif had crept into many of the sci-fi offerings that are now considered bona fide



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**LEFT:** Phoebe Cates and Willie Aames find love, sex, and truly terrific tans in *PARADISE* (1981), though Aames maintains that it wasn't really his Willie displayed on screen. **RIGHT:** Johnny Sheffield and Elena Verdugo remain platonic in the much earlier Bomba film, *THE LOST VOLCANO* (1950).

classics. A perfect example is Universal's *CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON* (1954), which had the advantage of Jack Arnold's masterful direction. Set in the "upper reaches of the Amazon," a team of scientists discover a Gill Man that lusts after Richard Carlson's female assistant (Julie Adams). It is particularly interesting to note the sexual implications that emerged in this and other films of the period. During an underwater swimming sequence, the Creature swims rhythmically underneath an unsuspecting Adams. The scene isn't overtly suggestive, yet it conveys the fact that the Gill Man's libidinous instincts are clearly at work. As audiences were becoming more sophisticated, monsters were becoming more sensual, both in and out of the jungle.

The public's response to *CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON* generated two successful sequels. *REVENGE OF THE CREATURE* (1955) found Gilly in captivity, where he was revealed to be a sympathetic monster; and *THE CREATURE WALKS AMONG US* (1956), completed the trilogy. Before the three films were released to television, the Gill Man's likeness, credited

to (though not really created by) renowned makeup artist Bud Westmore, had joined Universal's elite family of monsters.

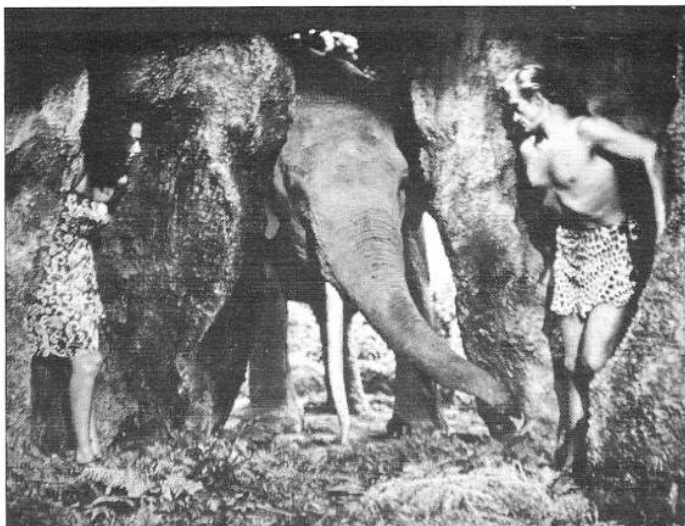
Working with creatures, both real and make-believe, always carries a certain element of risk. While filming *TYPHOON* (1939), Dorothy Lamour experienced a rather harrowing incident. During one scene, a chimpanzee named Coco unexpectedly jumped on her back and started pounding quite fiercely. Apparently, the 50-pound chimp wanted to "protect" his costar from her fellow players! Shaken as she was, the actress was able to return to the set and finish the production.

Beverly Garland, who braved several jungle expeditions in her busy career, has had even closer calls. The actress especially remembers *CURUCU, BEAST OF THE AMAZON* (1956), which was shot in Brazil. Cast as a doctor, Garland was required to do a scene with an all-too-familiar critter: "They had this boa constrictor as long as my house. A big, big boa constrictor, and he was supposed to wrap himself around me until I got away. They had two natives hold his tail and two na-

**LEFT:** Former football star Mike Henry and future frequently-undraped soap star Steve Bond played the title roles in *TARZAN AND THE JUNGLE BOY* (1968). **RIGHT:** The divine Brooke remains chastely shielded by the far less modest Chris Atkins in *THE BLUE LAGOON* (1980).







LEFT: Dorothy Lamour, Richard Denning, and a Republican chum in *BEYOND THE BLUE HORIZON* (1942). RIGHT: Coleen Gray unveils *THE LEECH WOMAN* (1960). BELOW: NYOKA (Kay Aldridge).



© 1957 Republic Pictures

tives hold his head; then they wrapped the snake around me. And so I got on the ground and screamed and screamed, and Curt Siodmak said, 'Cut! Cut, cut, cut! Are you all right?' He's the only one who spoke English, the director. I said, 'Of course I'm okay! Let's get on with this damned thing!' So we continued, and 20 years later, he comes to my house and has coffee and says, 'You know, I've gotta give you a lot of credit. I was really worried about that snake, because if the boys had let go and the snake constricted, we could never have gotten you out of there!'

Unfortunately, the mammoth reptile wasn't the only life-threatening hazard that Garland encountered. She also recalled for *Scarlet Street* the scene in an Indian village that was set ablaze by the natives: "They threw the torches and John Bromfield and I were in the middle of this thing, and it blew! I mean it just blew like a keg of dynamite! John and I stood there and I pushed him and he ran out and I thought to myself, 'Well, this is it! I'm gonna die. I'll never get out of here. That goes through your head in three seconds, but it seemed like a lifetime to me. I said, 'You know, Beverly, you might as well try.' And I ran! I got out, of course, but my eyebrows were singed and my eyelashes were singed . . . I mean, that's how close I got."

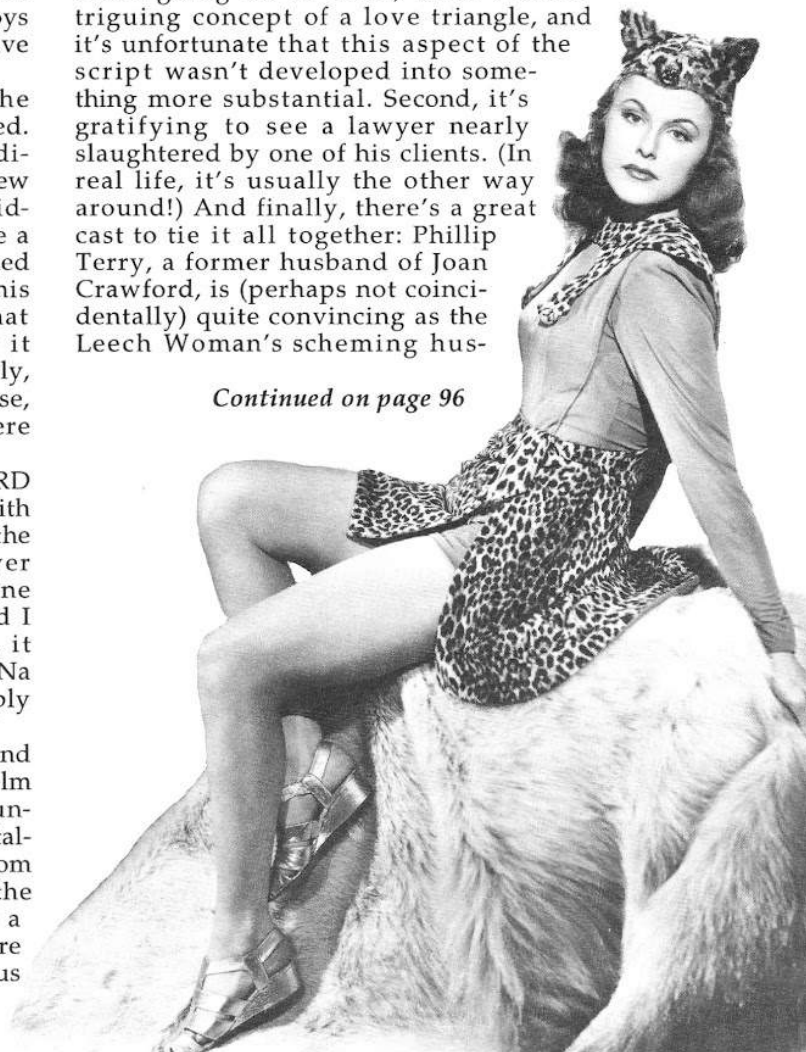
Garland has gentler memories of *KILLER LEOPARD* (1954), one of the later entries in the BOMBA series with Johnny Sheffield. She recalls her first impression of the rugged star: "He comes to the door, and I had never seen this boy before; he knocks on the door and his line is, 'Me Bomba.' And my line is, 'You Bomba?' And I tell ya, it doesn't sound funny, but to me—well, it broke me up! You Bomba, Me Bomba—like a song! Na na na na na na na! You Bomba! Me Bomba! I simply could not stop laughing!"

There are some unintentional guffaws to be found in Universal's *THE LEECH WOMAN* (1960), a little film that confronts our hidden desires to discover the fountain of youth. In this case, the jungle natives restore vitality to an aged woman by extracting glandular fluids from a human donor. With her newfound sex appeal, the Leech Woman (Coleen Gray) attempts to seduce a young lawyer (Grant Williams), much to the displeasure of his young fiancée (Gloria Talbott). She lulls the jealous

fiancée and drains her fluids, but the process fails to work this time, and the old girl reverts into a leather-faced hag. Enraged, she throws herself off a balcony as the horrified lawyer and local policemen look on.

Even with unconvincing special effects, and animal footage that doesn't quite match the corresponding close-ups of the actors, *THE LEECH WOMAN* has much going for it. First, there's the intriguing concept of a love triangle, and it's unfortunate that this aspect of the script wasn't developed into something more substantial. Second, it's gratifying to see a lawyer nearly slaughtered by one of his clients. (In real life, it's usually the other way around!) And finally, there's a great cast to tie it all together: Phillip Terry, a former husband of Joan Crawford, is (perhaps not coincidentally) quite convincing as the Leech Woman's scheming hus-

*Continued on page 96*





# Jungle Queen

# IRISH McCALLA

interviewed by  
Kevin G. Shinnick

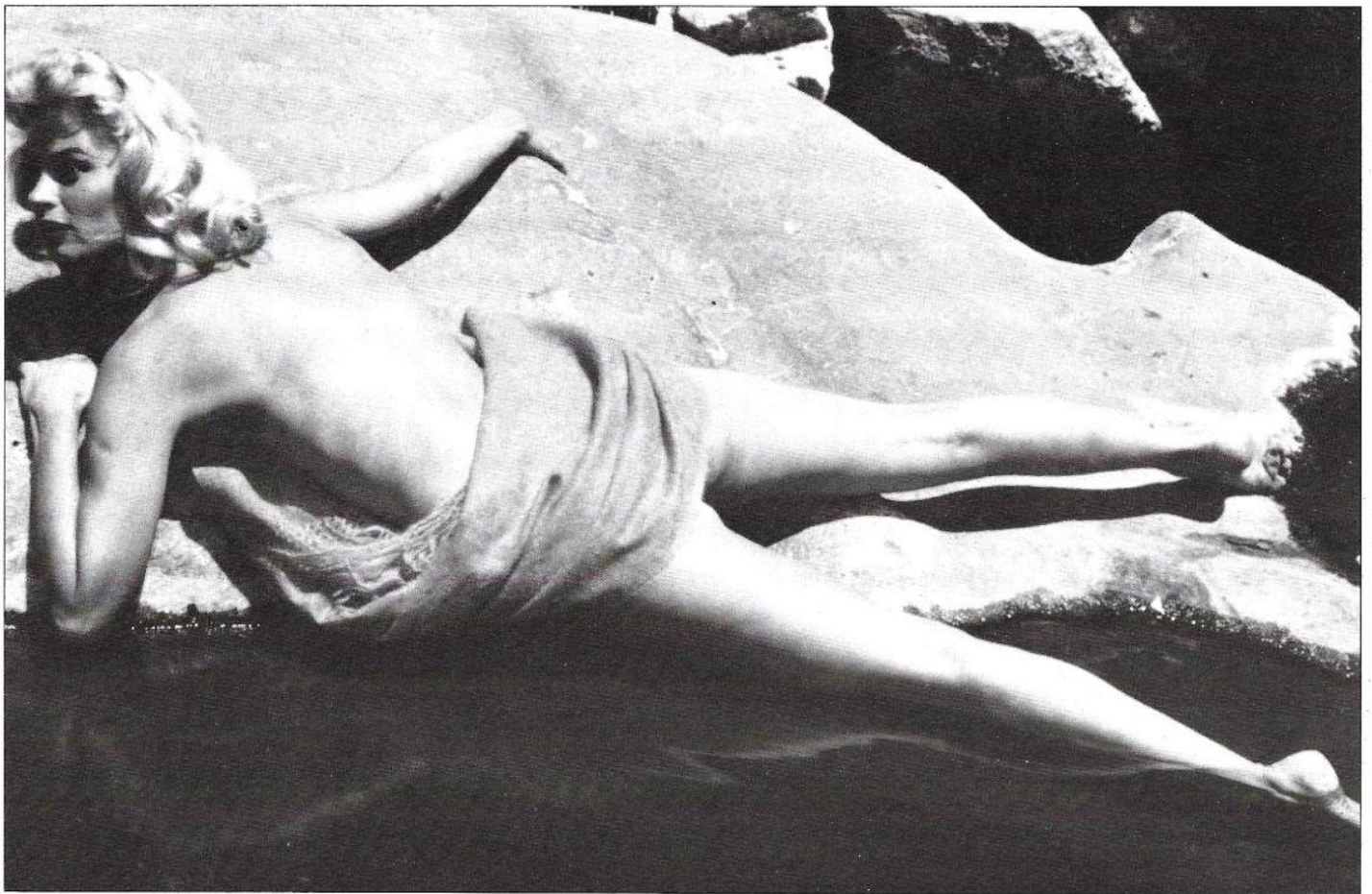
That statuesque, blonde jungle bombshell known to every baby boomer as Sheena, Queen of the Jungle is perhaps unique in showbiz annals: she began her professional life as an art object and worked her way up to artist!

Starting out as a pinup model for Gold Photos Syndicate, Irish McCalla was sidetracked into portraying the famous comic book character in the well-loved 1950s syndicated action series. Several movie roles followed, including the lead in one of the most outrageous sci-fi horrors of that fabulous decade: 1958's *SHE DEMONS*.

But let Sheena herself tell us all about it, in this exclusive *Scarlet Street* interview . . . .







**Irish McCalla:** From the time I was a little girl, I wanted to be an artist—which, of course, now I am. When I was a teenager, I used to draw copies of the Vargas girl. We'd trade them for gas for my boyfriend's car! All the filling stations had Irish McCalla Vargas girl copies! (Laughs) Funny, I didn't know I would end up being a Vargas girl!

**Scarlet Street:** Your interest was art, so how did you become an actress?

**IM:** Well, when I got out of high school I sold my saxophone for \$87 and went to California. I wanted to go where it was warm. I didn't want to live in snow. I was modeling and Tom Kelly, the photographer, called and said, "There's this guy gonna call ya, Irish. Don't hang up on him when he tells you he's a producer, 'cause he really is! He's looking for somebody to play Sheena." I said, "Well, I can't act, Tom." "Doesn't matter! Tell him you'll do your own stunts. He'll take you." So anyway, I tried out and Anita Ekberg was chosen. Then Anita got a better job with Batjac Productions and didn't show up for work, so they called me in a panic and I got the job. And I told Anita later, "You'da hated it!" (Laughs)

**SS:** By the time you got the title role on *SHEENA*, you'd been featured on some magazine covers.

**IM:** Oh, on many magazine covers. I'd been skin diving—I loved the ocean—and a newspaper photographer took some pictures of me. Not too long after that, he had a heart attack and his wife sold all of his photos to Gold Photos Syndicate. They found the pictures of me and published them in New York on New Year's Day. "This is what they're doing in California today, while you're all freezing." Well, they got so many calls and letters that they decided to find me. It took them two or three months, but once they found me they gave me a contract.

**SS:** And that led to your introduction to Tom Shelley.

**IM:** That was how Tom Shelley happened to know me. He said I looked exactly like the comic-book Sheena. Well, when I was a kid, I used to make believe I was Sheena.

**SS:** *SHEENA* was filmed in Mexico, wasn't it?

**IM:** Well, the pilot and the first two were shot in the States. The pilot was in color. It was the only one that was made in color. Then we went on location for what was supposed to

be three months, and it ended up to be seven-and-a-half! It really was rough working!

**SS:** Did you do all those stunts yourself?

**IM:** Well, I did them up until the 13th episode. I was very ill and I had to swing from a high platform on the river to a tree and knock a guy out of the tree. I was too sick to hold my own weight on the rope, and I smashed into the tree. Thank God I'd been taught by Jock Mahoney, who used to be a stuntman before he was an actor. He said, "Look, it isn't how you do your stuff, if you're dumb enough to do it. It's how you land." He taught me how to protect myself when I was landing, to relax and to bring my legs up—and that's what kept me from getting smashed right across the face. But I injured my arm and broke my leg and I looked like I'd been through a meat grinder. (Laughs)

**SS:** And you weren't exactly making a fortune doing this.

**IM:** Oh, Good Lord no! I made \$365 a week! That was it!

**SS:** My God! The monkey made more!

**IM:** And he was insured for more! He was more valuable. Blondes are replaceable. Chimpanzees—good ones, intelligent ones—aren't.



SS: *Speaking of chimps . . .*

IM: Oh, people always want to know if he was hard to work with. He was fine, but sometimes they'd work him when he was too hot. It's very hot down there. I used to have to have my makeup redone two or three times a day because it just melted off! When he was hot, he'd get very angry. And when you stop and think that a chimpanzee has the strength of two average men . . .

SS: *It could get dangerous.*

IM: I'll tell you a story: Neal—that was the chimp's name—Neal—that was very hot and cranky one day. We told the director that we couldn't work him, that we had to let him rest, but this particular director did not pay attention. He said, "No. We're going to go ahead and do the scene." Well, I had to poke the chimp with the blunt end of my spear. When I did, he turned and bit me—luckily, on the armband—and it terrified me. He looked like a gorilla coming at me! The trainer told me, "Now, Irish, you've got to whip him, 'cause if you don't he'll bully you." I said, "I can't whip him!" He said, "You'll be sorry." And I was! Neal knew the difference between rehearsal and when they yelled "camera." We'd go through the scene in rehearsal, and when they yelled, "Camera! Action!" he'd reach behind me and pinch my leg.

SS: *Not really?*

IM: Or he'd walk by and knock my feet from under me! I had my son Kim down there in the jungle with

me. He was almost four and he used to play ball with the chimpanzee. The chimp was really gentle with children. Never hurt them. Well, one day the chimp had the ball and Kim thought he should have the ball. I heard the chimp screaming and turned around and saw one of the crew holding Kim up against him. The chimp was on the man's shoulders, beating him on the head. I didn't know what was happening! I mean, you don't hurt my son, I don't care if you are a gorilla, so I took out after the chimp and chased him through the jungle. I was so mad I couldn't see. Everybody—the chimp trainer and everybody—they were chasing after me, yelling, "No! No! No!" I chased the chimp with the spear and was ready to run him through, I guess, but they grabbed the spear away from me. Well, from then on, that chimp was my best friend! (Laughs) Nobody could touch me. He was my protector, and it really made it difficult when we were filming and I had to be hit by one of the villains. They'd have to rewrite it so that the chimp wouldn't be in that scene, 'cause he'd jump on the villain. It was wild. It's different living with chimpanzees. (Laughs)

SS: *Any other chimp stories?*

IM: Remember Buddy Baer? He was huge! He was on one of the shows and he lost a bet that he could hold the chimp when he didn't want to be held. We let him get a good grip on Neal, and I yelled, "C'mon, Neal!

Chocolate milk! Chocolate milk!" And Neal just pushed his hands and feet against Buddy's chest and was out and running over to me for chocolate milk!

SS: *It must have been difficult raising a child in such an exotic location.*

IM: I'd put on my costume and Kim would say, "Are you Sheena, now?" I'd say, "Yes, I'm Sheena, now." And all day he'd call me Sheena. Then in the evening, when I'd take the costume off in the evening, he'd say, "Are you Mommy, now?" "Yes, I'm Mommy, now." And all evening I'd be Mommy.

SS: *The shows were being released while you were still filming.*

IM: That was the amazing thing. In fact, we were rushing through some of them, because we were falling behind. We were shooting and delivering them a week before they were on TV! When I got on a plane and went home, people were screaming, "Look at Sheena! It's Sheena!" Everybody knew who I was—except my younger son; he didn't want anything to do with me. He hadn't seen Mommy in a while and he wasn't sure who this lady was.

SS: *Maybe he felt rejected while you were away.*

IM: I suppose. But it hasn't hurt our relationship. The boys and I are very close. Over the years, it's been really good. In fact, both my sons have posed for me.

SS: *When you came back from playing Sheena in Mexico, you appeared on Milton Berle's variety show with . . .*

**PREVIOUS PAGE:** Irish McCalla was a popular pinup in the 1950s. **BELOW LEFT:** Another pinup pose from the Fabulous Fifties. **BELOW CENTER:** Fresh-faced sweater girl Irish McCalla. **BELOW RIGHT:** The one and only Sheena, Queen of the Jungle prepares to go into action!





# SHE DEMONS

by Drew Sullivan

In what surely should have been a fear-filled moment in the 1958 Astor Pictures production *SHE DEMONS*, stars Irish McCalla and Tod Griffin yank supporting player (and one time son of Charlie Chan) Victor Sen Yung out of the clutches of a cage full of bloodlusting, Godawful-looking female fiends. All well and good, but, having done so, McCalla and company quietly settle down on the ground in front of the cage, still well within reach of those jungle-red claws, for a restful chunk of expository dialogue. Hey, if you've seen one She Demon, you've seen 'em all!

Minutes later, in the hidden laboratory of a renegade Nazi scientist (Rudolph Anders as Karl Osler, "the Butcher"), McCalla screams bloody murder when she accidentally bumps into another cage—this one filled with pigeons!

The message is clear: a tropical isle inhabited by distaff demons is all in a day's work, but get McCalla in bird-infested Manhattan and this girl is seriously gonna need some Prozac.

*SHE DEMONS* has much, much more to recommend it to bad-movie mavens than merely the above, not the least being that the titular monstrosities are played by the Diana Nellis dancers, who, in their big number, brush the dust off the jungle floor with

their twinkle toes to reveal the studio floor beneath it. Then there's Gene Roth as head henchman Egor, bringing to the role all the talent and conviction he used when costarring with the Three Stooges. They don't make villains like Roth any more!

But perhaps I'm trying to be too tough an audience. The truth is, *SHE DEMONS* has its fair share of fun. There are monsters, Nazis, stock footage from *ONE MILLION B. C.* (1940), bombs, cocktail gowns, a disfigured wife for the mad doctor, and, best of all, Irish McCalla, who brings her own form of titular talent to this much-mocked relic of a simpler time.



**IM:** With Elvis Presley, and I didn't know who he was! I hadn't heard of him because we didn't get any American music in Mexico. All the music, the television—everything we had down there at the hotel was in Spanish! So I was wondering who he was. I thought he was another "in joke" or something. (Laughs)

**SS:** You also toured the country as Sheena, didn't you?

**IM:** Oh, I toured off and on for several years. That's what supported me.

**SS:** And then you were offered some film roles.

**IM:** Yes, B generation. *FIVE BOLD WOMEN*. That was a big role; that took several weeks on location.

**SS:** And then you did the cult classic *SHE DEMONS*.

**IM:** I had to watch it to find out why people liked it and I still don't know. (Laughs) But I'm glad they do.

**SS:** Any stories from that shoot?

**IM:** Oh, yes. My sister came to visit and one of the stunt men was showing off. You know, on a low-budget film they just go ahead and print if it's printable, right then and there. Well, he did his jump sooner than he was supposed to, but they didn't care. They just printed it rather than

set the whole thing up again. He was showing off for my sister. (Laughs)

**SS:** Anything else?

**IM:** Yes, my sister again! *SHE DEMONS* got her into the business. Tod Griffin was my costar in that picture. Tod's wife was working on several TV programs—*IT COULD BE YOU* and *TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES*—and she needed someone who could be a good secretary and take care of the stars when they were in the green room. I said, "My sister needs a job." And she stayed in the business for years, working on the other side of the camera. I used to wish I could work on the other side of the camera, because then you work all the time.

**SS:** In *SHE DEMONS*, you have a scene with a python.

**IM:** Yes, and I have an Irishman's fear of snakes. It was chilly in the mornings, and the handler used to wrap the python around his body under a big coat to keep it warm. Then, when it came time to put it up in the tree, he just took off his coat and unwound the snake. Anyway, we did the rehearsal. The snake was about six feet from me, and I turned around and screamed and

leaped over to Tod Griffin and hugged him. The hero. So they said, "Okay, that's fine. Let's shoot it." Well, it took them a while to get ready to shoot and the snake was getting cold. So he headed for a warm body. Mine. I turned around and the snake was about a foot from my face. I screamed and I leaped and I knocked Tod right over! We had to reshoot the whole thing, wind the snake back up. I'd been having a very hard time screaming. I'm not a good screamer. But, boy, I screamed a bloodcurdling scream when I saw that snake! (Laughs)

**SS:** Where was *SHE DEMONS* shot?

**IM:** It was shot first at Paradise Cove, then the scene with the snake took place at Fernwood, in the city. It's a real pretty area. The rest of it was shot in a studio, but I don't remember where the studio was.

**SS:** How much did you make?

**IM:** About \$1,500, as I recall.

**SS:** How many weeks?

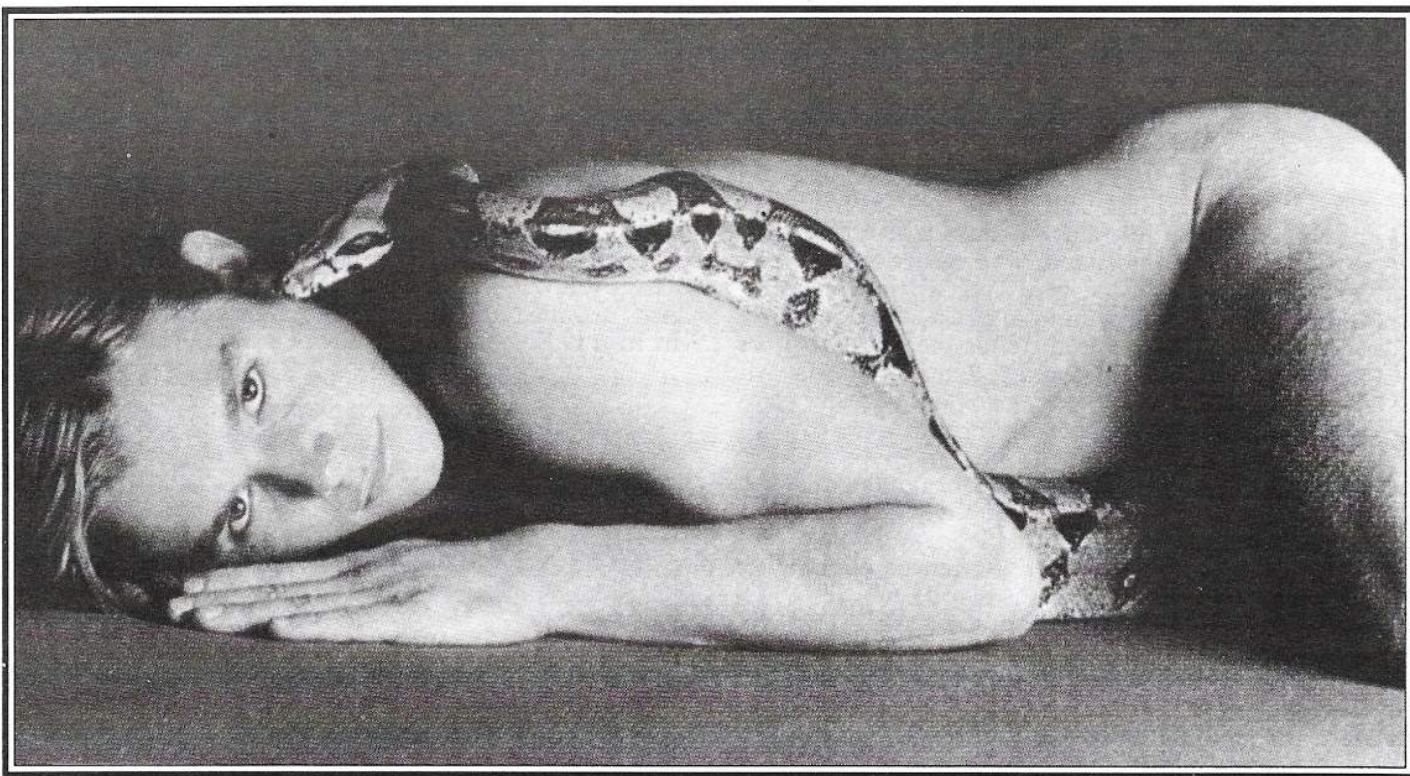
**IM:** One week.

**SS:** And then you did *HANDS OF A STRANGER*, which was a remake of *THE HANDS OF ORLAC*.

Continued on page 95

SCARLET STREET 77





## Nature Boy

# CHRISTOPHER ATKINS

Interviewed by Kevin Reno Minton and Richard Valley

South Seas adventure fans will never forget Christopher Atkins as the young island stud of *THE BLUE LAGOON* (1980) with Brooke Shields, but he has a lot of other roles to his credit, including the heroic swashbuckler of *THE PIRATE MOVIE* (1982), the male stripper of *A NIGHT IN HEAVEN* (1983), the blonde bloodsucker of *DRACULA RISING* (1993), the psychotic director of *DIE WATCHING* (1993), and the sociopathic rapist of Showtime's *FATAL CHARM* (1994).

Kevin Reno Minton first met Chris briefly at the opening of The Hard Rock Cafe in Orlando, Florida, shortly after the young star had completed a film called *SHAKMA*, a horror tale about baboons gone wild. They later got together (minus the baboons) in California for this interview.

Later still, at a convention in New Jersey, *Scarlet Street* editor Richard Valley had dinner with Chris and wrapped up the story with a few questions about Chris' reunion with *BLUE LAGOON* director Randal Kleiser on *IT'S MY PARTY* (1996).

Living up to his on-screen reputation, here's Christopher Atkins, once again letting it all hang out . . . .



*Scarlet Street: Early in your film career, you were promoted as a sex symbol. Your first movie was THE BLUE LAGOON, in which you wore a loincloth or less. You wore one again in THE PIRATE MOVIE and played a stripper in A NIGHT IN HEAVEN.*

**Christopher Atkins:** I was totally in favor of all that. The loincloth became a status symbol, because THE BLUE LAGOON was such a huge hit. The part of Frederick [in THE PIRATE MOVIE] was a comic take-off on that. I was young at the time, but I've never been afraid of my sexuality. My feeling is, "Hell, sooner or later I'm going to be 80 and look back and say, "Now, why was I such a prude?" Why didn't I just do it, you know?"

**SS:** Like posing for a poster wearing nothing but a boa constrictor, for instance?

**CA:** Boy! You really dig stuff out of the past, don't you? Yeah, absolutely! Hollywood wants press, any kind of press. To be perfectly honest, I was young and naive, footloose and fancy free back then. I just was going with the flow. Nastassia Kinski and I are friends. When somebody had this idea that I do the male version of her poster, I thought, "Well, what the hell? Why not?"

**SS:** So you posed with a snake between your legs . . .

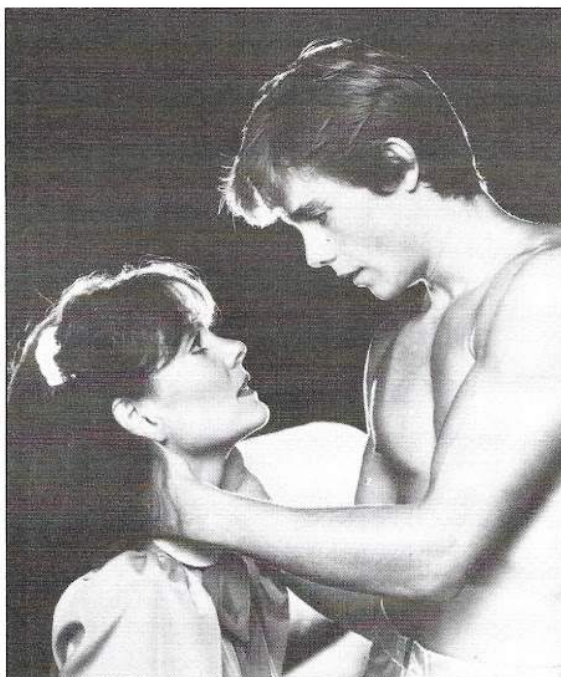
**CA:** What snake? There was no snake . . . nope, no snake. (Laughs)

**SS:** Male movie nudity—or its lack compared to female nudity—is a hot topic. Do you think there's an unfair balance between male and female nude scenes?

**CA:** An unfair balance? Well, I don't know. I've seen numerous frontal nudity with men recently—and not even so recently. I mean, I did it in THE BLUE LAGOON and you can see it. I think they even show it on television! It flashes by. I don't see what's unfair if the population is demanding to see one rather than the other. The business is geared to a male audience in that way. It's hard for me to see that it's mostly women doing nude scenes, because I'm always the one doing it in the films. They're always asking me to do it.

**SS:** Let's talk about THE BLUE LAGOON. We've heard more than one horror story about tropical islands that look absolutely beautiful on film but were hell to live on when the camera wasn't rolling.

**CA:** The worst were the coral cuts, because when you get them a little organism actually grows. You can grow coral out of your arms or your feet or your legs, because it incubates in your skin. As time went on, they turn into what's called "tropical ulcers." That was always a pain, trying to cover those up every day. We shot in winter and, because of that, the leaves were a lot browner on the palm trees. So they spray-painted the leaves green! The guy who owned that island was from Oregon and he decided that he wanted to have an Oregon feeling to it, so he planted pine trees all over



Leslie Ann Warren and Christopher Atkins developed an interesting teacher/student relationship in A NIGHT IN HEAVEN (1983).

the place! So there we were on this tropical island, trying to shoot around pine trees, the last thing you'd expect to see. (Laughs)

**SS:** Aside from that, how were the living conditions?

**CA:** These two Australian girls ended up making these wonderful meals. When the movie was over, they went back to Australia and started up Chaos Catering for film. We used to play backgammon. I remember one of them, Brenda, and I playing in front of my tent on the beach. I always had to have an all-over tan for the movie.

**SS:** In other words . . .

**CA:** Let me tell you something: if you're on an island for three and a half months and you're four and a half hours by boat from the nearest store, and there's nobody but 30

crew member on the island, I guarantee that you'd be running around without your clothes on. I became a devout nudist after that movie.

**SS:** How did you manage a complete tan when you first arrived?

**CA:** They sent us two weeks before principle photography to do nothing but tan. They built these little tanning booths for Brooke and I to do nothing but lay down and tan all over. As time went on, I wound up on the other side of the island, at the nude beach, where I had no trouble getting an all-over tan. It's no big deal. It's only in the United States that they make a big deal about nudity. I think the United States is way behind the times. Society makes it really wrong and what that does is create more tension, more pressure, more anger, and all the rest.

**SS:** In addition to the tan, you were quite blonde and curly-haired for BLUE LAGOON.

**CA:** Well, the hair color was natural. The curls they did, and between the water and the sun and the perm solution my hair lightened even more. Randal Kleiser just saw this boy in curls. He curled my hair and I said, "You've gotta be kidding me!" (Laughs)

**SS:** How difficult was it to film the underwater scenes on location?

**CA:** Oh, that was the easiest and it was the most fun. Brooke might tell a different story, but I've always loved the water. I've been a scuba diver since I was 16 and I think that was one of the reasons they chose me.

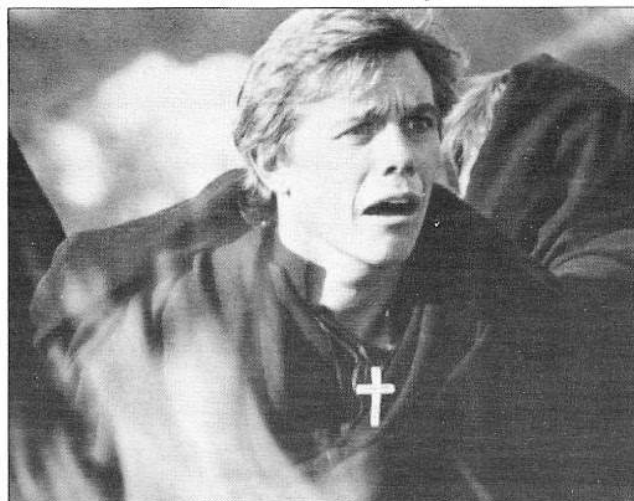
**SS:** Why weren't you and Brooke ever reteamed for a sequel?

**CA:** They certainly talked about it. Columbia put me under contract for four-and-a-half years, which 20th Century Fox bought me out of to do THE PIRATE MOVIE. We figured they just wanted to hold me for BLUE LAGOON 2, but they just never got it together. I wasn't even approached for the sequel.

**SS:** Was such a sudden success as THE BLUE LAGOON and your resultant celebrity status difficult to handle?

**CA:** You never think so at the time. As much as I didn't want to change, lifestyles do change. All of a sudden your whole life becomes a public issue. Money, wealth, people, prestige—all of that suddenly comes into play. I got mobbed every time I went out of the house. Every single time! You know, I never expected to enter the movie business. I





**LEFT:** In the Roger Corman production of *DRACULA RISING* (1993), Chris Atkins got his first shot at playing one of the traditional movie monsters. Not only did he sink his teeth into the role, so did his ghoulish costar! **RIGHT:** Chris is all fired up over his part in *DRACULA RISING*.

wanted to be a doctor in sports medicine; I was into sailing and all that sort of thing. I'm a very big believer in fate. I truly, truly believe that I was going in that direction and all of a sudden fate took me and put me here. It's like something else has other plans for me.

**SS:** *You played a season on DALLAS.*

**CA:** *DALLAS* was fun. I'll never forget the very first day. I was really nervous, because it was a huge show and there were big stars. I walked on the set at Lorimar, and I had all these clothes because they wanted to do a photo shoot. And I'll never forget: Larry Hagman came right up to me, shook my hand, and said, "Hey, welcome aboard!" Then he took my clothes and helped hang them up for me. I was so impressed by that! Larry Hagman was a huge star, and he was carrying my stuff for me. But they were all like that. We had a lot of fun on that show.

**SS:** *For instance?*

**CA:** One of my favorite stories is my first kissing scene with Linda Gray. She had gotten some Procaine or something from a dentist, which is numbing. She put it all over her lips and, after the scene, she said, "Chris, that was such a great kiss! It was so wonderful! You're such a great kisser!" She went on and on, and everybody was standing around, and I was standing there feeling pretty good. Next thing I know my lips just went absolutely numb, and drool was coming down my face! I said, "What did you do to me?" And they all laughed and laughed! So, I used the Procaine and I ran to Priscilla Presley and gave her a big kiss. The next thing you know she took it from me and kissed Patrick

Duffy! They were always playing practical jokes on that set, always.

**SS:** *Many of your scenes took place at the Ewing swimming pool.*

**CA:** One day my manager got a call from Lorimar Productions. They accused me of sticking a sock in my swim suit! That made me feel pretty good—but, I mean, I'm not that weird a guy! I mean, c'mon, give me a break! (Laughs)

**SS:** *You've made a few movies that we haven't seen . . .*

**CA:** And I'll probably make a few more! (Laughs)

**SS:** *What about MORTUARY ACADEMY and FATAL CHARM?*

**CA:** Well, *MORTUARY ACADEMY* was supposed to be the next cult film after *EATING RAOUL* for Paul Bartel and Mary Woronov; it was their follow-up to that movie. Unfortunately, there were too many cooks in the kitchen. I'd never done a macabre type of thing, and I was trying to get away from that *BLUE LAGOON* image and get into different things. *FATAL CHARM* was an excellent piece, because it gave me the opportunity to be a twisted, psychotic killer, but with a Ted Bundy, nice-guy type of look. I got good reviews for that film, which was what I really needed. Unfortunately, the film didn't do what it was supposed to do, because the company went bankrupt.

**SS:** *How did you get the title role in DRACULA RISING?*

**CA:** Just came up.

**SS:** *How appropriate!*

**CA:** I read the script and it was definitely interesting. There was a very interesting love story that was kind of cool. I'd never done that genre. I figured that, if you do a vampire

movie in Hollywood, you've made it. Hollywood was built on Dracula, man; I mean, think about it. Dracula and Frankenstein . . .

**SS:** *You weren't entirely satisfied with the finished film, though.*

**CA:** Well, I should've known there would be a problem when I was talking to the director. He went on and on and not once did he say it was a love story. I'm really a romantic at heart. I truly believe that, if they kept the script towards a romantic angle, it would have been a good movie. They had the locations, they had everything . . .

**SS:** *Except the right director?*

**CA:** There are times when directors just don't know what they're doing. They get to a place where you're going to look stupid on film and you know it—you know it and that's the way it is.

**SS:** *You're one of the few male movie vampires to be light-haired. Did anyone want to make you look more typical?*

**CA:** Well, they did try it at one point. The Bulgarian makeup artist couldn't speak a lick of English, and made me look like some crazy Bela Lugosi thing! We toned it down. But in Anne Rice's books, the vampires are blonde. There are some very platinum blonde, bleach-blonde vampires there.

**SS:** *Roger Corman was the executive producer.*

**CA:** Never met the man.

**SS:** *Are you familiar with his work?*

**CA:** Oh, yeah, he's king of the low budget, ultra-low budget movie. He always makes money.

**SS:** *What was it like working in Bulgaria on DRACULA RISING?*

*Continued on page 82*



# THE BLUE LAGOON

By Drew Sullivan

If the cover of a recent *Rolling Stone* is any indication, Brooke Shields has at long last shed the girlish modesty that kept her from shedding her clothes in Randal Kleiser's steamy 1980 version of Henry De Vere Stacpoole's 1908 novel *The Blue Lagoon*. Giving her all (skinwise, at least), Our Miss Brooke is obviously going all out to promote her new hit sitcom *SUDDENLY SUSAN*, a show that has suddenly achieved the impossible: it's made Shields, widely perceived as a sweet kid but something of an industry joke for the better part of 15 years, into a bona fide TV star.

The next thing you know, we'll be seeing Christopher Atkins, Shields' considerably less coy costar in that landmark epic of teen romance, on the cover of *GQ*, dressed for Ascot!

It's a far cry from the cover of August 11, 1980's *People*, in which the carefully posed young lovers illustrated the claim that Shields and "co-star Chris Atkins stir another ruckus over teen love in the movies"—or, as the article headline within *People*'s pages rather more strongly put it, "BLUE LAGOON's Brooke

Shields and Chris Atkins cruise into yet another furor over kiddie porn."

*People*'s piece went on to list such harsh detractors of the film's adolescent love story as *Parents* magazine, *The New York Times*, and that queen of good taste, Rona Barrett, but had to admit that "LAGOON has tapped a large and lucrative audience of moist-palmed prepubescents."

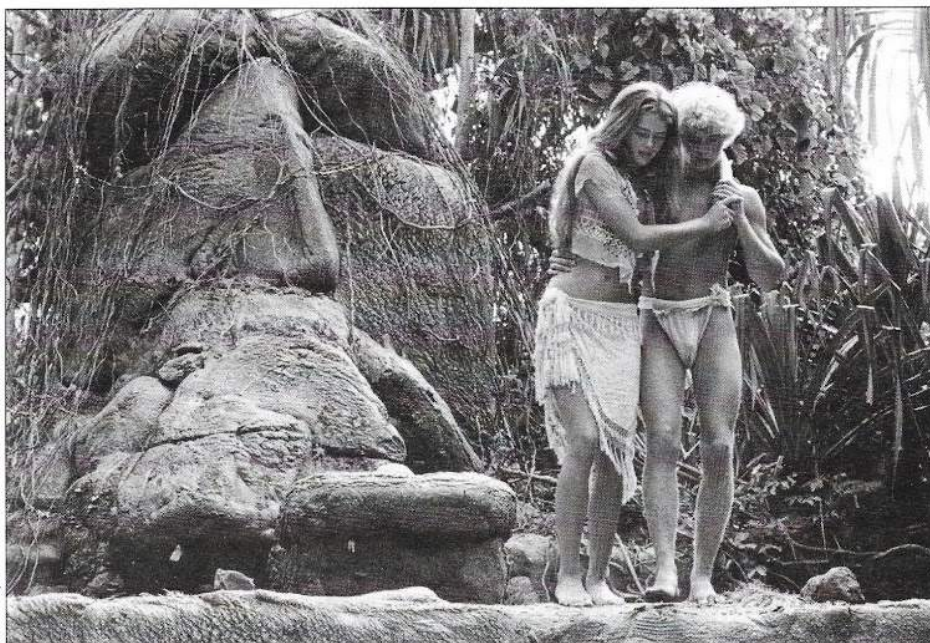
Needless to say, it wasn't the possibility of moist palms that had the Keepers of America's Moral Order in an uproar.

Yesterday's scandal is today's nostalgia, naturally, and in 1996 *THE BLUE LAGOON* emerges refreshingly free of the smut attributed to it by outraged PTA mothers and members of the 700 Club. (How can you be shocked by a movie in which the wild and winsome female lead clearly has had somebody Elmer's Glue her lengthy brown tresses to her breasts?) True, the blonde, curly-haired Atkins is on full display in several scenes with full frontal nudity, and, in long shot, exhibits a firm grasp on the finer points of auto eroticism. True, Shields' nude double eagerly steps in where the movie's angelic star fears to tread. But *THE BLUE LAGOON* is as innocent and fresh as an ocean breeze, and just about as threatening.



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Brooke Shields and Chris Atkins waltz through the South Sea island paradise of Randal Kleiser's *THE BLUE LAGOON* (1980).

#### CHRISTOPHER ATKINS

*Continued from page 80*

CA: We had a huge communication barrier. We had interpreters, but it was very difficult. Shooting there was beautiful! It's a little rustic, because they're just out of communism, but it's a pretty, pretty place. It was cool. Making a phone call was a pain in the ass, but everything else was great!

SS: Tell us about *SHAKMA*.

CA: That was a movie I did in Florida with Roddy McDowall. I guess

you could say it was a horror film. I really enjoyed Roddy McDowall a lot, and I had a good time, too, with Amanda Peterson. I mean, I had a good time with everybody.

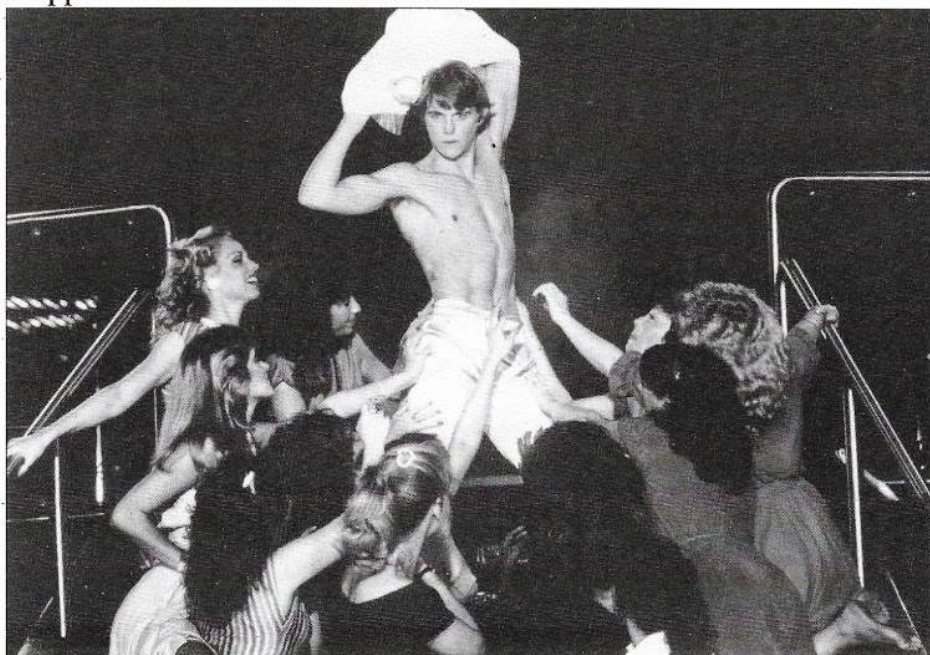
SS: Now we have to ask you about *DIE WATCHING*.

CA: Oh, yeah, you have to! (Laughs) Yeah, it's getting hot in here, now!

SS: It's one of the erotic thrillers that are currently so popular.

CA: Yeah, well, *DIE WATCHING* was one of those movies that came to me. It was an interesting piece,

Cementing his reputation as an anti-clotheshorse, Chris played a male stripper in *A NIGHT IN HEAVEN*.



because I thought I could make this bad guy actually look sympathetic. I thought that would be kind of cool, to make a bad guy look sympathetic. I didn't expect it to be as poor as it turned out, but at the same time I knew it wasn't going to be another *BLUE LAGOON*.

SS: You weren't happy with the movie, but were you happy with what you got to do with the character?

CA: Yes and no. It was quick, so I didn't get as much time to develop it as I would have liked. The people were terrific. Usually those low-budget films turn out to be a nightmare, but it was fun.

SS: Of the films you've made, have you a special favorite?

CA: Well, *THE BLUE LAGOON* is my favorite just because it was the very first one. It was an experience beyond experiences. It was like a dream. When I came back to New York, I literally wasn't sure what had happened to me after three and a half months.

SS: Who's your favorite costar?

CA: They were all pretty darn good, really. Brooke was special in the sense that we grew up together on that island.

SS: How is the Christopher Atkins of today different from the 19-year-old who made *BLUE LAGOON*?

CA: Probably a lot wiser and a lot more grown up, though I've realized that I never want to lose the kid inside of me. I'm not going to struggle with it anymore.

SS: Has that been difficult for you?

CA: I guess I'm like Paul Newman in *THE HUSTLER*; I was always very good at a lot of things, but I was never really excellent at any one thing. I always wondered if I was supposed to be excellent at something or not. I think, because of that, I have a lot of insecurities about myself. But when I take the time to look at myself and see what I've accomplished . . . like I've got two incredible kids and a wife. I'm very, very lucky to have that. I kick myself a little bit because I'm always worried. I'm trying to put my insecurities away in the sense of just letting things take their course.

SS: What was it that brought out all your insecurities?

CA: Probably alcoholism. I mean, that will tear anybody up, but you don't know it at the time. I just thank God that it happened quickly and came crashing down on me real fast, so that I was able to get out of it. I'd been riding on this *BLUE LAGOON* high; I just expected people



to do all the things they'd been doing for me, and it wasn't happening anymore. I wasn't willing to stick my foot out, take the steps to make it happen. I became a very angry person and it was all due to alcoholism. Now it's been over six years since I've touched any alcohol. I'm in a program and I put my hand out to people as often as I possibly can, because I know how it is.

SS: What has made you happiest about your career?

CA: I look back on the people I've met—like at the Night of a Hundred Stars, which was the greatest night of my life. Just being asked there with Brooke. There I was with Warren Beatty and Diane Keaton! I sat backstage and had a beer with Richard Chamberlain, Paul Newman, and Princess Grace. We all had a beer together, watching the monitor during rehearsals. An experience like that comes once in a lifetime.

SS: You recently appeared for BLUE LAGOON director Randal Kleiser in IT'S MY PARTY.

CA: IT'S MY PARTY is about a man who's dying of AIDS and takes his own life. He's deteriorating quickly and he decides to throw a party for himself and celebrate life with all of his friends and say goodbye. I play another guy who dies of AIDS. You know, in FORREST GUMP, how they computer-generated the guys legs off? Well, they cyberscanned my face and sunk my eyes and cheeks in. It shows you where the disease can take you, and it sort of helps explain the other guy's decision to kill himself. I don't think anyone will even recognize me!

SS: Randal Kleiser is gay. It's still a rarity, even for a director, to be openly gay in Hollywood.

CA: I think it's good; it's an educational process. But it can create a problem, too. By pushing or forcing something upon people, you tend to push people further away. For instance, many people in the gay community have sent letters saying, "Come out of the closet. We know you're gay." That doesn't do anything but piss people off, you know what I'm saying?

SS: Why would gay people want Christopher Atkins in particular to come out of the closet?

CA: I think it's so they can say, "See, I told you there's more of us in this country than you ever guessed." I don't care. If they want me to be an example to gay society, so what? Unfortunately—or fortunately—I'm not gay.

SS: But some of your best friends . . . ?

CA: I love gay people, but my feeling is that, if you draw too much attention to yourself, you end up segregating yourself. Everybody wants to be like everybody else. Well, sometimes when you say you want to be like everybody else, you're really saying that you're not. If someone admits to being gay—that's sad, to have to admit it; there's nothing to admit. You're saying who you are because of the stigma society has put on it. Why should anyone care? The secret to life is love and fun, period! That's my spiritual, philosophical 10 cents for the day.

SS: Just to be happy?

CA: Who cares who comes out of the closet or not, so long as you're happy? The only difference it makes is in the sense of being an example to other people. That's important,

because I know a lot of gay people who say, "I don't want to be this way." They struggle with it and it's horrible and awful to watch. You know, you win the battle when you stop fighting the war. It's all in the surrender. There's nothing wrong with it; there's nothing wrong.

SS: You have a bright outlook for someone who had such a hard time of it with alcoholism.

CA: I was hidden in this dark little corner of my mind and I wasn't capable of growing. Now I'm growing and I can see my faults. I can look at myself objectively and say I can't blame anyone else; it was my own damn fault. So now I'm growing again and having a wonderful time. I can still be a bozo, but I don't need to knock myself out like I was doing. And that's my life . . .

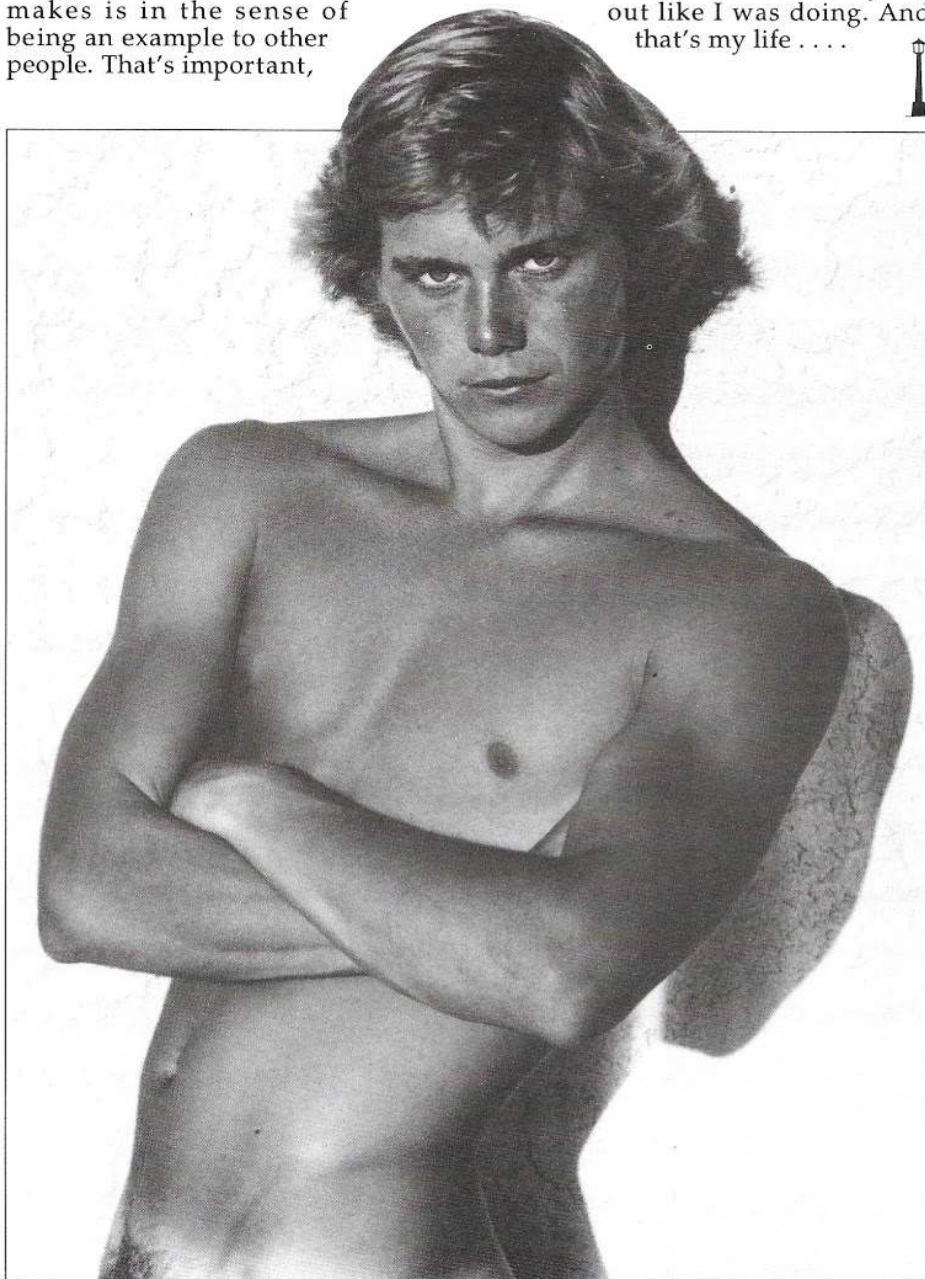
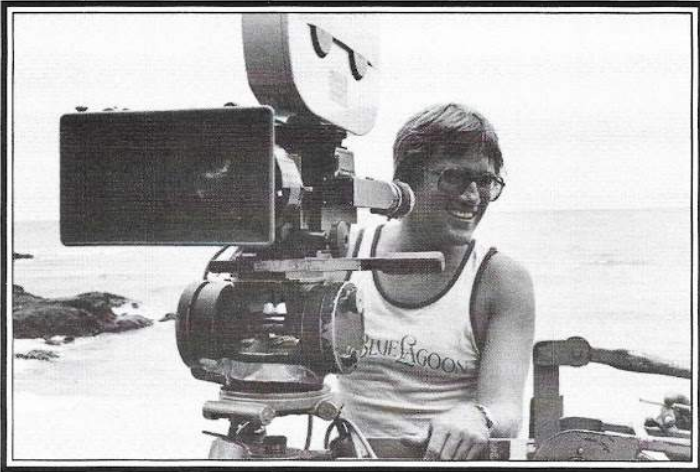


Photo courtesy of Christopher Atkins / Photo: Greg Gorman





Interviewed by Jessie Lilley

# It's His Party!

# RANDAL KLEISER

Director Randal Kleiser has made his share of sci-fi genre films—including *FLIGHT OF THE NAVIGATOR* (1986) and *HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID* (1992)—and has even helmed the screen's most successful musical—no, not *THE SOUND OF MUSIC*, but *GREASE* (1978)—but he is perhaps best known for the flesh-filled, South Seas teen romance *THE BLUE LAGOON*, which first brought Chris Atkins to the screen and gave further exposure to the young Brooke Shields (and even more exposure to her stand-in). Recently, *Scarlet Street* spoke to the openly gay Kleiser about his life and career, including his early student days with two names familiar to film and film magazine fans . . .

**Scarlet Street:** You were college classmates with fellow filmmakers George Lucas and Don Glut. In fact, Don told us about the night he dressed up as Spiderman and you and Lucas locked him out of the room.

**Randal Kleiser:** Oh, yeah! We tried to embarrass him. All the football players lived across the hall and we wanted them to—well, we were just playing a prank. Don turned it around. He said to the football players, "Hey, knock that door down!" And they obeyed Spiderman and knocked our door down! (Laughs) And there's Lucas and I against the wall, terrorized by these big brutes, thinking that we're gonna get it!

**SS:** That'll teach you! What led you to make *THE BLUE LAGOON* after the big success of directing *GREASE*?

**RK:** I read the novel by Henry De Vere Stacpoole. It was written at the turn of the century and was, I guess in its day, racy. I ran into Dav-

id Lean when I was scouting locations in Fiji. I told him I was scouting for *BLUE LAGOON* and he told me that, when he was a boy, he kept a copy under his mattress. (Laughs) It was the dirty novel of its day. I didn't know that there was a movie made already of it, but when I looked at the film I realized that they had changed the novel considerably. They added a subplot of some men coming to the island and forcing the boy to dive for pearls to fill out the missing section, which was about the emerging sexuality. But I wanted to go back to the novel . . .

**SS:** Did you feel that you needed the name value of Brooke Shields, even though she refused to perform her own nude scenes?

**RK:** No. The original cast was Diane Lane and Willie Aames. The Friday before we began shooting, they both called and said they didn't want to do nude scenes. The only reason I didn't use Brooke to start with is I could not find a tall boy to be with her. (Laughs) When Diane and Willie dropped out, I immediately called Brooke and set her. Then I needed to find a boy who would match her. We went back through all our tapes—we interviewed and videotaped probably 500 guys—and tried to find somebody, and Christopher Atkins was on one of the tapes. His hair was in a very contemporary style, so I came up with the idea of curling it to make him look more like a jungle boy.

**SS:** Chris was really lucky.

**RK:** We'd found one guy in Boston that we offered the part to and he got scared and turned it down. Later, he became a checker at a supermarket and people were buying *People*

magazine with Chris Atkins on the cover. (Laughs)

**SS:** So the casting was very much a last minute thing?

**RK:** Oh, yes! Brooke and Chris had not met. I was on the beach with Chris when Brooke arrived by seaplane. They whisked her across this lagoon and up onto the beach and she jumped off and met Chris for the first time—and she was taller than him! (Laughs)

**SS:** You had nudity in *THE BLUE LAGOON* and *SUMMER LOVERS*. Is it difficult to deal with an actor's self-consciousness about appearing nude?

**RK:** Yeah. Brooke did not want to do it, so I had to create the illusion she was nude. She had a stunt double to do the nudity for her. Well, the double broke her leg. I had to quickly improvise. An Australian caterer who was roughly the same height as Brooke—though she was older—she became our nude stunt double. She'd be on one side of the island cooking breakfast and we'd radio her, and she'd come running across the island to do nudity and then go back to make lunch. (Laughs) It was a very loony kind of shoot.

**SS:** Chris Atkins said that it got to the point that, between takes, he'd simply stay naked.

**RK:** Chris had no problem with it. On *SUMMER LOVERS*, Daryl Hannah was concerned about it, but Peter Gallagher was fine. When we were shooting on the nude beaches, everyone else was nude, so that wasn't too bad. When you're surrounded by people who are relaxed, it helps.

**SS:** Speaking of beaches, didn't you appear in some of the American International beach party movies?





**LEFT:** Life was a beach when Randal Kleiser was an extra in the AIP beach party films and *THE IMPOSSIBLE YEARS* (1968). **RIGHT:** Kleiser directs Olivia Newton-John and John Travolta in *GREASE* (1978).

**RK:** I was an extra, yes. During my days as a student, I worked as an extra so I could learn about movies. I was in Elvis Presley movies. I was in *CAMELOT*, *HELLO DOLLY!*, *THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE*. When I made *GREASE*, I'd seen a lot of musicals shot.

**SS:** What's your most vivid memory of directing *GREASE*?

**RK:** My most interesting memory was when we shot the big dance number at the carnival. We were shooting it in tiny sections, because it was complicated and there were so many people. Well, George Cukor came to visit me and we asked him if he wanted to see the whole number from beginning to end. He said, "Yes." So we had 500 people do the entire number! Well, it was 100 degrees and these 500 dancers were all going full out. George was sitting at the end of the football field in a director's chair and they all ended

up at his feet with their arms open at the end of the song. And he said, "Oh. Very nice." (Laughs)

**SS:** Very nice?

**RK:** And it was so funny, because these 500 people were performing for this one guy!

**SS:** While you were dancing on the beach for AIP, did you meet any of the great horror stars?

**RK:** I talked to Basil Rathbone about the Sherlock Holmes series. He was complaining, because the residuals didn't start until after he made them and he got nothing for them. He was very upset about that. But I enjoyed talking to Vincent Price. I wrote a story for him. He was very nice about it, but it never got off the ground. Even though I was just a student, he read it and responded. I was always a big fan of Boris Karloff. He was playing Mother Muffin on *THE GIRL FROM U.N.C.L.E.* when I met him. It was very surreal, 'cause

I expected this grandfatherly man and he came out wearing false eyelashes and a wig!

**SS:** *BLUE LAGOON* pushed the envelope on teen sex and nudity in 1980. Why was there less sex and nudity 11 years later for *RETURN TO THE BLUE LAGOON*?

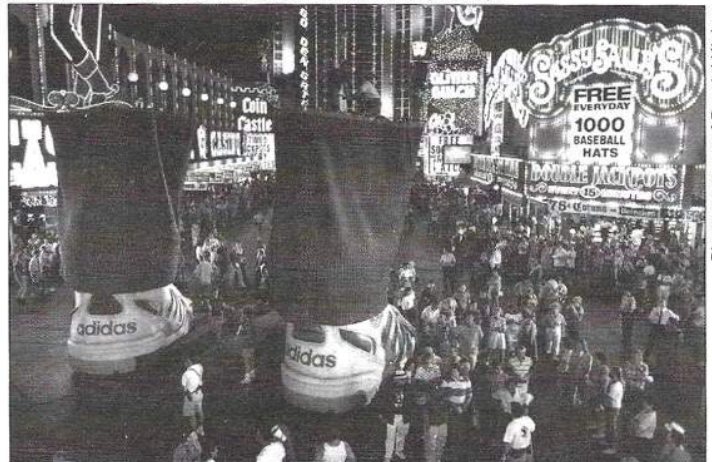
**RK:** I don't know. I was executive producer and really only worked on it from afar. It was directed by William Graham, who set the tone.

**SS:** Why was there an 11-year gap between the two films?

**RK:** Well, it was [Columbia Pictures' head] Frank Price's idea to make the sequel that way. I wanted to follow the original author's plotline; that's what I wanted to shoot. But Frank Price thought that making the second movie more like the first was the way to go and he pushed it in that direction. I wasn't really happy.

**SS:** Let's step back a bit. How did you get your start as a director?

**LEFT:** Flying the space ship in *FLIGHT OF THE NAVIGATOR* (1986). **RIGHT:** *HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID* (1992) parodied the Las Vegas attack of Bert I. Gordon's *THE AMAZING COLOSSAL MAN* (1957).







**LEFT:** Christopher Atkins and Brooke Shields find young love in the sparkling waters of *THE BLUE LAGOON* (1980). **RIGHT:** Suddenly not Susan! Brooke stepped aside when the scene called for nudity and was replaced by the film's Australian caterer. No wonder Chris looks confused! **NEXT PAGE:** Randal Kleiser directs Shields and a strategically posed Atkins.

**RK:** Well, I made a film that was seen by Sy Price, who was then the head of television for Universal. He gave me a seven-year, non-exclusive contract at Universal to direct television. I did *MARCUS WELBY* and *LUCAS TANNER*. Then I started working for Spelling/Goldberg and did *FAMILY* and *STARSKY AND HUTCH*. About that time I started doing TV movies. *THE BOY IN THE PLASTIC BUBBLE* with John Travolta, *THE GATHERING* . . .

**SS:** Let's not forget that you also directed *DAWN: PORTRAIT OF A TEEN-AGE RUNAWAY*.

**RK:** Yes. I was hoping you wouldn't mention that one. (Laughs) I didn't think it worked very well.

**SS:** *DAWN* starred Eve Plumb and featured Leigh McCloskey as a male prostitute who was really straight. Do you think TV wasn't ready at that time for a portrait of a gay hustler?

**RK:** Well, they did do one, because in the sequel, *ALEXANDER: THE OTHER SIDE OF DAWN*, he had an affair with a guy. I mean, if you say you're straight, does that mean you are? (Laughs)

**SS:** Well, no, not at all. You've made two films with John Travolta.

**RK:** The first time I worked with him was right after *WELCOME BACK KOTTER*. *THE BOY IN THE PLASTIC BUBBLE* was his first lead and he was very concerned that it work. He also had insomnia, so he would call late at night and ask me which take I thought was best of a certain scene we'd shot that day. And I was—you know—I had to sleep! (Laughs) He always was very obsessed with work. He's a workaholic and an insomniac. I cast Diana

Hyland as his mother in that movie and they became lovers. Then she died of cancer and he accepted her posthumous Emmy for her performance. I was originally set to direct *SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER*, but Robert Stigwood decided to switch me over to *GREASE*. When I worked with John Travolta the second time, he was a huge star from *FEVER* and he suddenly had an entourage and had gone through a lot of stuff. We remained friendly, but he was suddenly a very different animal.

**SS:** Do you have any other memories of filming *THE BOY IN THE PLASTIC BUBBLE*?

**RK:** Yes—working with Ralph Bellamy. We filmed a master shot with Travolta walking all around the set talking to him. Then, when we came to do Ralph Bellamy's closeup, we didn't have enough room off-camera for John to be there. I couldn't figure out how to help Bellamy and he said, "Oh, I can do it. I'll just look out into space and follow him with my eyes." So he played the whole scene in closeup exactly as he'd done it in the master. His eyes would follow where Travolta had walked and when Travolta sat down his eyes would go down. He'd memorized everything! Such a professional!

**SS:** What about making *FLIGHT OF THE NAVIGATOR*?

**RK:** The most unusual part of that movie was that the producers had some blocked funds. It was a coproduction with a foreign distributor and they had blocked funds in Norway. They said they had to use up some of that money, so we shot all the interiors of the space ship in a warehouse in Norway! We built a

three-story set in Burbank, put it in boxes, shipped it to Norway, reassembled it, and shot the interiors there—and in the end, the blocked funds didn't come through! (Laughs) So all that money and effort of flying and working in a warehouse in Norway added to the budget instead of subtracting from it.

**SS:** *BIG TOP PEE-WEE*?

**RK:** Well, working with a hippo and a giraffe was a real experience. Those are very big, very dangerous creatures and they cannot be controlled very easily. It was Michael Jackson's giraffe. It got freaked out during a parade sequence and took off. The giraffe was heading toward the freeway, so everybody got on horses and tried to head it off and finally stopped it. It would have been very difficult to tell Michael Jackson that his giraffe had been hit by a truck. (Laughs)

**SS:** How about *WHITE FANG*?

**RK:** We had to use fake snow, but we couldn't use plastic because of the wolves. They couldn't be around plastic snow, so we had to use potato flakes—and then the wolves would eat the potato flakes!

**SS:** And then there's *HONEY, I BLEW UP THE KID* . . .

**RK:** Memorable? Closing down the main drag in Las Vegas for 10 nights with 1,000 extras and two cranes that had giant shoes attached to them. The cranes would lift the shoes and walk down the middle of the street with all the people screaming and running around.

**SS:** Your latest film is *IT'S MY PARTY*, about a gay man who is dying of AIDS. He plans to commit suicide, but decides to throw a party first.



**RK:** The last couple of days of shooting were the most memorable, because the movie was shot entirely in sequence. Lee Grant had been holding back during the whole party, and when the son is carried out—he's passed out from pills and he's being carried away from her—she reaches out to try to grab him and breaks down, crying. That was very chilling, because it was so realistic. The whole crew was stunned. That genuine sense of loss that she was able to come up with . . .

**SS:** A lot of friends and past stars in your films, including Olivia Newton-John, George Segal, Roddy McDowall, Bruce Davison, Paul Regina, Bronson Pinchot, and Chris Atkins, took part in *IT'S MY PARTY*. Did you offer John Travolta a role?

**RK:** No. He was busy with *BROKEN ARROW* and other things.

**SS:** Were parts offered to anyone who turned them down due to the gay subject matter?

**RK:** There were a couple of people, yes. We explored a lot of people, because we needed to find two men where the chemistry would work. We didn't just cast one guy and say, "Okay, we need another." That's how we ended up with Eric Roberts and Gregory Harrison.

**SS:** Has it effected your career at all to be openly gay?

**RK:** No.

**SS:** Do you think it will ever reach the point where a movie star, someone in front of instead of behind the camera, can be openly gay?

**RK:** I don't know. America's so up and down about that. One minute they're open, the next minute they close up again. It goes in cycles. Now that it looks promising that the AIDS epidemic may be getting under control, I think that will shift things and have people not be so connected with negativity in terms of gays. AIDS set back acceptance, I believe, because they're always com-

binning those two things—AIDS and gays. There's a festival going on in Los Angeles as we speak, the Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. It's the biggest it's ever been. Everything is sold out. I think it shows a shift and a change in the amount of films being made on the subject. People are becoming more educated—at least, the younger generation. They certainly aren't as close minded as their parents.

**SS:** What's next on the horizon for Randal Kleiser?

**RK:** Well, right now I'm trying to find a movie that I want to spend some time on. I've been reading lots of stuff and just haven't zeroed in on anything yet.

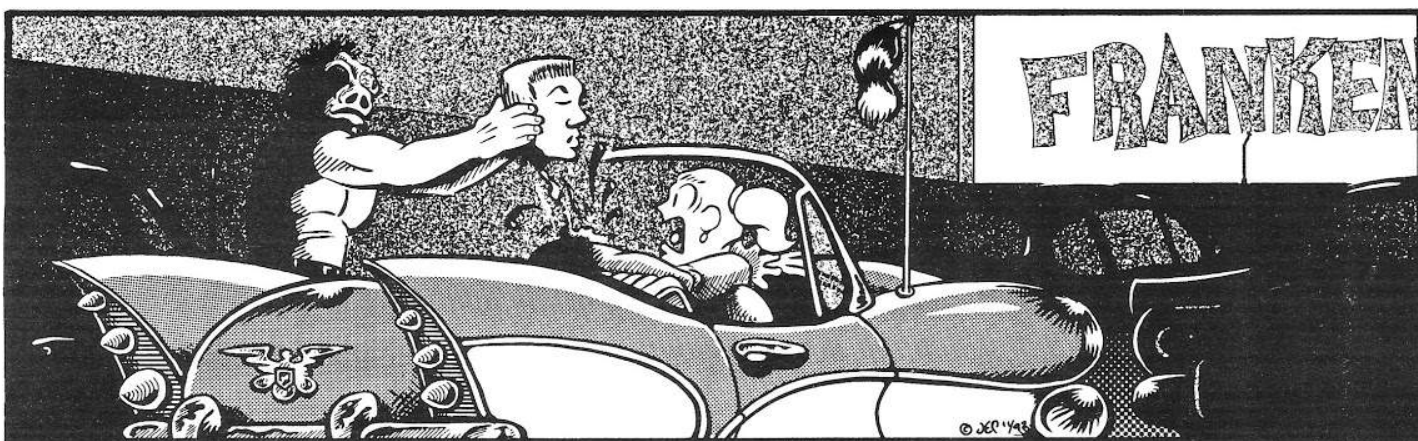
**SS:** Might you wind up making another teen movie?

**RK:** No! Matter of fact, I don't do them anymore. I stay away from teenagers, dogs, fantasy, and kids—as much as possible. (Laughs)

Photo courtesy of Randal Kleiser







Shock Drive-In Presents

# TERROR IS A MAN

by John Brunas

**WARNING:** The picture you are about to see has a scene so shocking that it is necessary to forewarn you. We suggest that the squeamish and faint-hearted close their eyes at the sound of the bell and reopen them when the bell rings again.

—The Management

A film of grim intensity and dark emotions, *TERROR IS A MAN*, when it was released to theaters in late 1959, didn't enjoy the mainstream popularity of such genre brethren as *I WAS A TEEN-AGE WERE-WOLF* (1957) and *THE FLY* (1958). The majority of those who saw it caught up with this disquieting little sleeper not at their neighborhood Bijous, but on one of the many incarnations of *CHILLER THEATER* so prevalent on '60s television. Sure, the avant-garde-ish title may not ring a bell, but the film's somber tone and startling imagery have been indelibly embedded in the minds of many a cinematic thrill-seeker.

While the opening titles fail to give credit where credit is due, it's apparent that *TERROR IS A MAN* was inspired by two classics of horror literature: H. G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896), and, on a more subtle note, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). Following in Moreau's footsteps, Francis Lederer's singularly obsessed surgeon Dr. Charles Girard conducts repugnant experiments in vivisection, striving to surgically transform a panther into a human being. His ultimate goal, however, exceeds even Moreau's aspirations. Like Mary Shelley's tragic hero, Victor Frankenstein, Girard at-

tempts to create the "perfect" being, stripped of the primitive instincts of the beast and the corrupt tendencies of man.

\*\*\*

En route to San Francisco, a freighter, the *Pedro Queen*, is destroyed in an explosion just off the coast of Blood Island, a remote spot a thousand miles off the coast of Peru. The lone survivor of the disaster, William Fitzgerald (Richard Derr), an oil engineer, is found in a beached lifeboat by Dr. Charles Girard (Francis Lederer) and his assistant, Walter Periera (Oscar Keesee), and taken to the doctor's home deep in the jungle, where he is nursed back to health.

Fitzgerald senses a malignant aura hovering over the Girard household and does a little investigating. Tiago (Peyton Keesee), the young houseboy whom he be-

friends, makes veiled references to the doctor's nightly hunting expeditions. The maid, Selena (Lilia Duran), Tiago's older sister, seems scared to death and avoids any contact with the stranger. Both Dr. Girard and Walter speak in vague terms of a panther that has escaped from the lab and is now prowling the jungle. Only Frances (Greta Thyssen), the doctor's desperately lonely wife and part-time lab assistant, is straightforward in expressing her feelings of mortal danger. Fitzgerald promises to help her leave the island.

After everyone has retired, the escaped animal returns to the house. Lurking in the bushes, it spies on Frances as she nervously paces about her bedroom. The beast returns to the jungle and savagely attacks and





kills two of the islanders. Discovering the blood-splattered corpses, the terror-stricken natives seek refuge on a neighboring island. Fitzgerald stumbles upon the deserted village the following day, as well as the recent grave of Selena and Tiago's mother, who had been murdered by the panther.

Girard and Walter recapture the animal and take it to the lab, where the doctor and his reluctant wife prepare it for the latest in a series of painful operations. Fitzgerald, hiding in the shadows, observes their activities. He is astonished to discover that their patient isn't an animal at all—the creature is human in shape! Its entire body is swathed in bandages, save for its face, which is hidden from Fitzgerald's view. As the "patient" is locked in a cage for the night, Frances quietly approaches and utters a plaintive, "I'm sorry."

Looking over Girard's papers, Fitzgerald deduces that the scientist is attempting to "speed up" the process of evolution and is using the hapless creature in the lab as his guinea pig. The doctor reveals that, two years before, he had abandoned a thriving Manhattan practice to test his theories on the secluded island. After a series of over 50 operations on the panther, Girard has proven that, through the painstaking modification of a species' vital organs, the subject will lose the characteristics of its own kind and take on those of another. His dream is to imbue his creation with a "fresh new mind" free of the shackles of past human generations, thus becoming the "father of a new race of men." But Fitzgerald isn't sold. He argues that, though the surgeon may accomplish his goal from a physical standpoint, the beast will retain the same brutal emotions of its own species.

Girard invites Fitzgerald to witness his latest operation on the hybrid. As the medico operates on the manimal's larynx, Fitzgerald is startled by its distinct display of human emotions. Changing his view, he later comments to Girard, "I saw his eyes and there was a soul there." But the impatient surgeon cannot be bothered with such vague abstractions. He is ruthlessly determined to complete the creature's transformation, despite the dangers involved. Thus far, he has taught the creature to walk like a man. The next step is to teach it to speak.

Walter becomes increasingly reliant on the bottle and jealously spies on Frances and Fitzgerald, who have fallen in love. One night, Walter attacks Frances, but is

thwarted by the creature's shrieks. Enraged, the brutish assistant beats the poor beast senseless with a two-by-four.

Girard at last succeeds in teaching the creature to speak a single, significant word: man. But the doctor's hard-fought victory is shattered when the beast, reacting violently to Walter's sudden entrance, goes berserk and turns the lab into a shambles. In the ensuing struggle, the creature is badly burned in a fire.

Drunk and out of control, Walter confronts Girard and attempts to shoot the man-beast, but is himself slashed to death when it breaks free of its bonds during a power surge.

Girard ignores Fitzgerald's suggestion that they wait until dawn to pursue the escaped creature. Armed with guns, the two men dash off into the jungle, unaware that their quarry lurks just outside the house. Selena is unfortunate enough to stumble upon her mother's murderer, and is brutally killed. The beast abducts Frances. Pursuing his creation to the edge of a precipice, Girard makes a futile attempt to reason with it. Suddenly, without warning, the cat creature leaps and sinks its claws into Girard's face, then tosses his bloody body off the cliff. Fitzgerald pumps several shots into the beast's body before it flees.

Staggering along the beach, leaving a trail of fresh blood, the dying man-beast encounters Tiago, who gently coaxes it into a small boat. By the time Fitzgerald and Frances reach the beach, the craft and its doomed passenger have drifted far out to sea.



While Dr. Girard (Francis Lederer) is kitty-cornered by the murderous Cat Creature (Previous Page), Fitzgerald (Richard Derr) pussyfoots with the doctor's wife (Greta Thyssen).

\*\*\*

Criticized in some circles for its slow, talky exposition, derivative subject matter, and meager production values, *TERROR IS A MAN* has one vital element both the movie's champions and detractors recognize: its palpable aura of malevolence. Under the sure-handed direction of genre newcomer Gerardo de Leon, Harry Paul Harber's screenplay unveils its revelations in a methodical fashion, nurturing a toxic mood of suspicion, deceit, and dread.

The term "Lewtonesque" (i.e., a cinematic style inspired by the classic series of horror films produced by Val Lewton in the '40s) has been overused to the point of parody in recent years. In the case of *TERROR IS A MAN*, however, it is aptly applied. Visceral shocks come in measured doses: a glimpse of savage eyes sizing up





**LEFT:** It's one big happy family on Blood Island, except for the poor, tortured beast in the basement. **RIGHT:** Investigating his temporary home, William Fitzgerald (Richard Derr) discovers that others have lived—and obviously died—there.

a prospective victim . . . a claw silhouetted against a lab wall during a power surge . . . a closeup of a surgeon's scalpel cutting through a patient's larynx. In comparison to its Technicolored, blood-and-guts contemporaries, *TERROR IS A MAN* is restrained indeed. With the exception of the cat creature's sudden, fatal attack on its creator, all of the murders occur off-camera. To de Leon's credit, the horrific impact of those deaths isn't diminished one whit.

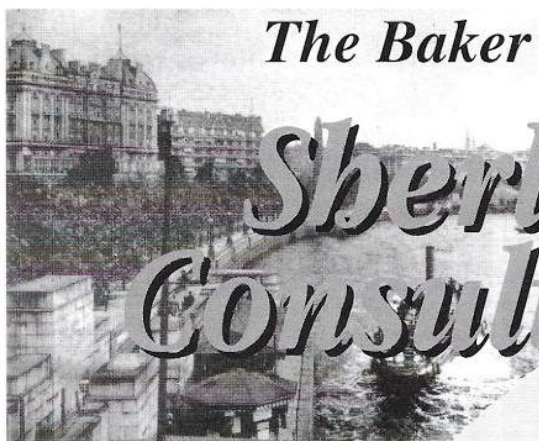
From *TERROR IS A MAN*'s earliest moments, in which the nature of the escaped killer is merely hinted at, through the episodes depicting the tortured creature's capture and unendurable agonies in the name of science, to the tragically poetic climax on the moonlit beach, Harber's depiction of this laboratory freak strikes a balance between revulsion and pity. The few, teasing glimpses of the cat-man we get in the film's first half make the case that this is no ordinary "animal," as the other characters disingenuously call it. The creature walks upright like a man and has an obviously human torso. Except for the claws, only its face—a hideous blend of human-feline features—betrays its true origin.

Filmed in Manila, the Philippines, in April 1959, under the deceptively prosaic title *THE MAN*, it was the first of several low-rent exploitation shockers released by the production team of Kane W. Lynn and Eddie Romero. Lynn was a distinguished naval officer and fighter pilot stationed in the Philippines during World War Two. Romero was the son of a Philippines ambassador to the court of St. James. He edited an underground resistance paper during the war, began his motion picture career as a writer, and was the recipient of the FAMAS Award, the Philippines equivalent of the Oscar. Joining forces, Lynn and Romero produced three movies shot in the islands: *CITY OF SIN*, aka *THE SCAVENGERS*, starring Vince Edwards and Carol Ohmart (U.S. release 1960), *LOST BATTALION* (released in the States by American International Pictures in 1962), and *TERROR IS A MAN*. When Lynn became a partner in the formation of Hemisphere Pictures, Inc., in the early 1960s, he reissued *TERROR IS A MAN* under the more lurid title *BLOOD CREATURE*, despite the fact that the movie had already made the rounds on television under its original moniker.

**LEFT:** Tiago (Peyton Keesee), Frances Girard (Greta Thyssen), William Fitzgerald (Richard Derr), and Walter Periera (Oscar Keesee) cautiously approach the escaped Cat Creature. **RIGHT:** A late night assignation between Selena (Lilia Duran) and the besotted Walter.



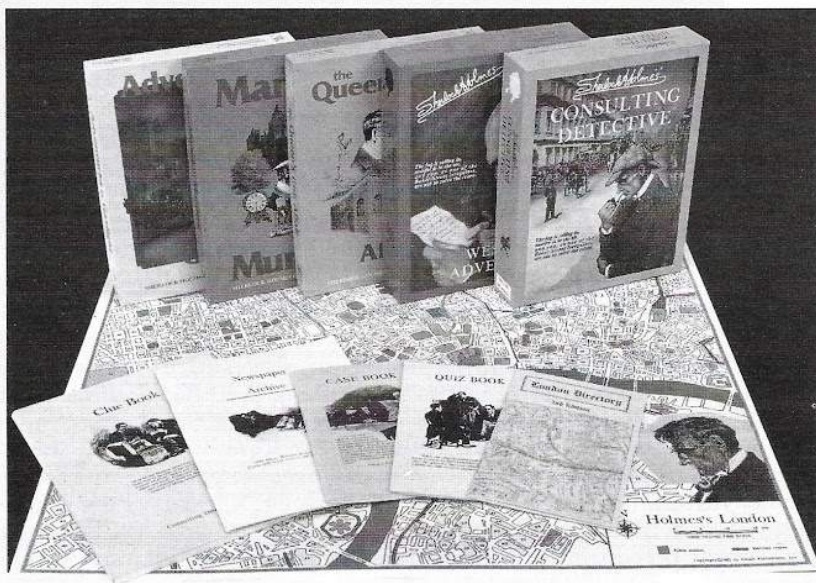




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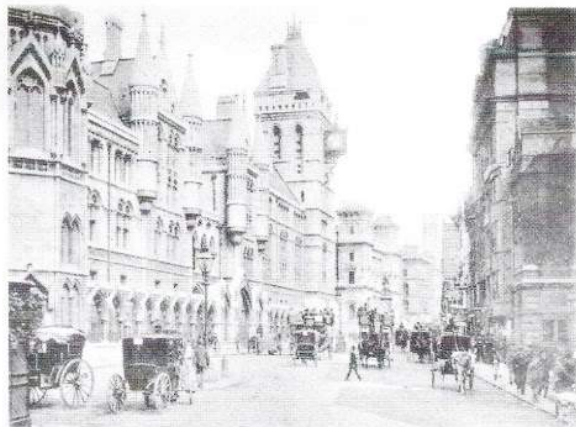
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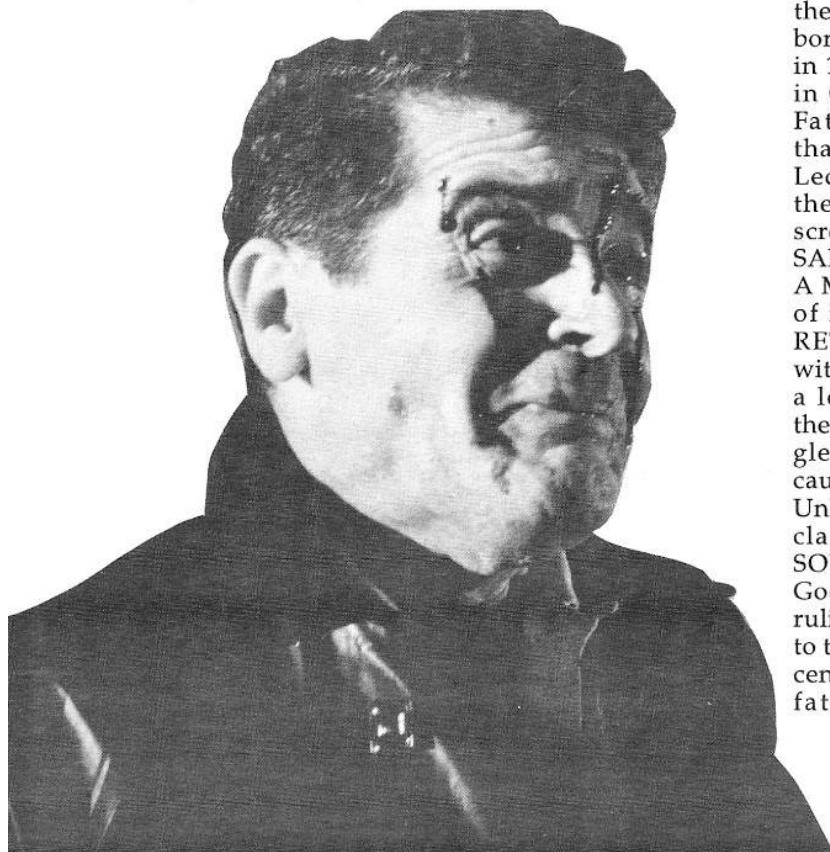






**TERROR IS A MAN (1959), with its one, tragic experiment in turning animal into man, manages to match the pathos and horror of the earlier ISLAND OF LOST SOULS (1933).**

In what was surely a sign of the times, the distributors of *TERROR IS A MAN*, borrowing a leaf from the William Castle Book of Film Exploitation, devised a cheap gimmick to bolster receipts: a warning bell that would warn audience members of a particularly gruesome moment, and then ring again when the scene was over. By the time the gimmick was finally used—nearly halfway through the movie, seconds before Dr. Girard makes a deep incision across the creature's obviously foam-rubber throat—most of the audience had probably forgotten all about the warning bell and sat wondering what that strange ringing was on the soundtrack!



*TERROR IS A MAN* didn't need such a device to promote its shock and suspense values—the film's creators invested their work with enough of both. Photographer Emmanuel I. Rojas captures the pervasively malignant mood in his low-key imagery, occasionally composing shots from the subjective view of the beastman. In one scene, the camera "becomes" the creature as it prowls the jungle, enters the village, and slaughters two natives. The foreboding musical score (by Ariston Auelino) works in tandem with the eerily effective lensing, but eventually loses its impact through sheer repetition.

Much of the credit for making *TERROR IS A MAN* the gem that it is goes to Francis Lederer. The Czech-born actor, a matinee idol in Berlin, came to Hollywood in 1932 after scoring a success opposite Louise Brooks in G. W. Pabst's *PANDORA'S BOX* three years earlier. Fated to be cast in a variety of synthetic romantic roles that traded on his sensuous, Continental good looks, Lederer was given ample opportunity to display his thespic gifts as twins, one good, the other evil, in the screen adaptation of Thornton Wilder's *THE BRIDGE OF SAN LUIS REY* (1944). Prior to appearing in *TERROR IS A MAN*, the actor contributed to the horror genre one of its most ominous portraits of vampiric evil in *THE RETURN OF DRACULA* (1958). Lederer imbues Girard with shades of character that might have been slighted by a less charismatic performer. True, Girard possesses the same traits of most horror movie medicos: he's single-tracked, unyielding, and fiercely dedicated to his cause. But he isn't a typical ranting, raving lab lunatic. Unlike Charles Laughton's Dr. Moreau in Paramount's classic version of the Wells novel, *ISLAND OF LOST SOULS* (1933), Lederer's Girard isn't burdened with a God-complex. He doesn't take inordinate pleasure in ruling the lives of those around him. He's sympathetic to their miseries. His inevitable downfall is more reminiscent of Frankenstein than Moreau: were it not for the fatal blunders of their foolish assistants, both men

*Continued on page 97*



# Book Ends

## The Scarlet Street Review of Books

### TARZAN: THE LOST ADVENTURE

Edgar Rice Burroughs and  
Joe R. Lansdale  
Dark Horse Books, 1996  
211 pages - \$19.95

Edgar Rice Burroughs is one of the most influential writers in the history of American letters.

This statement may cause academics to dive for their nearest volume of Ford Maddox Ford, but as a statement of fact, it is irrefutable. Burroughs created in Tarzan one of the 20th century's greatest and most enduring myths, a character triumphantly translated into such diverse mediums as film, radio, television, and comic strips. Tarzan, an English lord born in the African jungle and raised by a savage tribe of apes, has entered the same mythic realm as the tales of Paul Bunyon and Jason and the Golden Fleece.

As if not content with creating a mere cultural icon, Burroughs went on to write a champion series of scientific romances about the planet Mars, and a fascinating bunch of books about Pellucidar, a lost world at the Earth's center. There, evolution ran along different lines, with gigantic reptiles becoming the dominant species, and man falling into primitive savagery.

Now, the Tarzan legend continues with the publication of a "lost" Bur-

roughs Tarzan novel, finished by respected science fiction writer and anthologist Joe R. Lansdale.

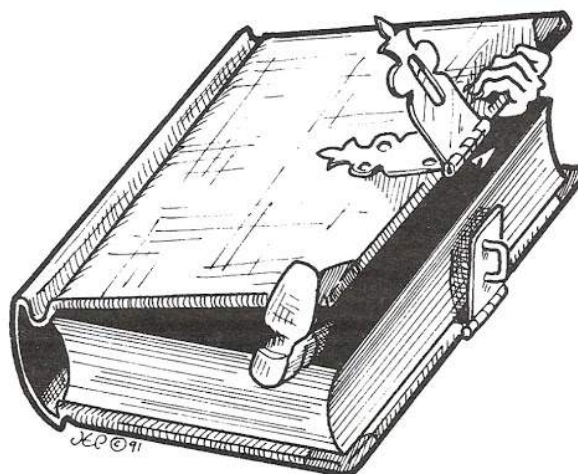
Published by Dark Horse Books, *Tarzan: The Lost Adventure* is classic Burroughs, and a treat for Tarzan fans both old and new. This handsome book boasts a magnificent dust-jacket illustration evocative of classic pulp covers. The chapter heads feature fine illustrations by such famous artists as Gary Gianni, Mike Kaluta, and Charles Vess.

This is the original Tarzan of the novels, and not the monosyllabic corruption of the MGM and RKO feature films. Burroughs' ape man is an accomplished linguist, a savage warrior, and the Lord of the Jungle. Tarzan is more a force of nature than a human being—life has meaning for him, but he knows that, in the African jungles, survival belongs to the fittest. He is not cruel, but he is mostly animal.

The story concerns Tarzan protecting a scholar's expedition from the threats of a band of escaped legionnaires, and their later adventures in the lost city of Ur. (The members of Professor Hanson's party are charmingly fallible, one of them producing the *Boy Scout's*

*Handbook* while trying to navigate through the bush.) In a clever crossover, the mysterious god worshipped by the inhabitants of Ur is one of the prehistoric beasts from Pellucidar.

As a boys' action adventure yarn, *Tarzan: The Lost Adventure* can't be beat. This is the Burroughs of *Tarzan* and "*The Foreign Legion*" (1947), written in an easy, colloquial English. His prose line continued to improve during his years as a writer and it's interest-



ing to speculate about what kind of work Burroughs would have produced had he written less and polished more.

*Tarzan: The Lost Adventure* is a wonderfully satisfying story. Burroughs' original manuscript, not much more than a fragment, has been revised and finished by Lansdale. The original text ended before our intrepid heroes made it to Ur, but Lansdale gets us there and back comfortably. The only off-key note in the final chapters is the sometimes gratuitous violence, with arrows piercing eyes, decapitations, and a literal blood bath. Burroughs could be savage in his depiction of jungle life, but his violence was always organic to the story. Lansdale seems simply bloodthirsty.

But that is a minor quibble with a tale so well told. Lansdale provides a climax worthy of a Harryhausen movie. He does Burroughs proud.

—Bob Madison

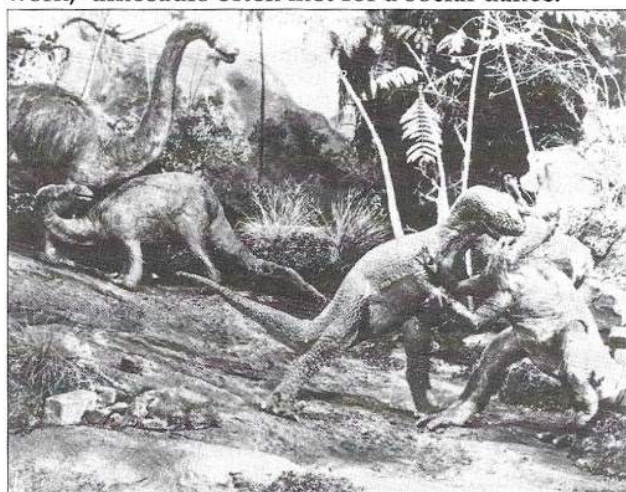
### THE ANNOTATED LOST WORLD

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle  
Roy Pilot and Alvin Rodin, Editors  
The Wessex Press, 1996  
264 pages - \$34.95

Before Michael Crichton, before even Edgar Rice Burroughs, there was Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* (1911).

A cornerstone of fantastic literature, Doyle's novel started its own "lost world" subgenre. It is a well-spring that has proven inexhaustible, creating a tradition that continues to this day. Its influence has been felt by writers as diverse as Burroughs with such novels as *The Land That Time Forgot* (1924) to Crichton and his own recent *The Lost World* (1996). And let's not forget such

It's a little-known fact that, after a hard day's work, dinosaurs often met for a social dance.





classic motion pictures as KING KONG (1933) and THE VALLEY OF GWANGI (1969).

Like Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, *The Lost World* has proven such a seminal component of genre literature that it transcends criticism. With this novel, Doyle managed to craft not only an exciting science fiction adventure, but a convincing romance, a good "front page" story, a jungle drama, and a sometimes chilling tale of ego run amok. If this were his only book, Doyle's place in the history of genre fiction would be secure.

Briefly: newsman Edward Malone travels with Professor Challenger's party to a remote South American plateau. There the group finds the last of the dinosaurs and a lost race of apelike men. The expedition finally escapes, taking with them a pterodactyl that breaks loose during a London scientific debriefing.

*The Lost World* introduces Doyle's other classic creation, Professor George Edward Challenger. The professor is not drawn with the subtle lines of Sherlock Holmes and has never achieved the same legendary status—there is something about Challenger's genius that is too strident, too obstreperous, for the character to be fully human. With the face and physique of a gorilla, Challenger is the most violent of logicians: disagree with him and you'll be lucky not to have your neck broken.

That Challenger was obviously dear to Doyle's heart is made abundantly clear in this terrific, annotated edition of the classic novel. Editors Roy Pilot and Alvin Rodin provide a wealth of material, including quotes from Doyle's original notes for the story and some fantastic, never-before-seen photographs.

Doyle had hoped to fashion his novel along the lines of a great, scientific hoax, even going so far as to

create photographs of himself and friends as Challenger and his party of explorers. To look at the celebrated creator of Sherlock Holmes decked out in a wig and false whiskers is a sight not easily forgotten!

Also included in this edition's invaluable end notes are a list of the various scientific works that Doyle consulted, his notes to illustrators, and his opinion of the landmark 1925 film version, the first great showcase for KONG creator Willis O'Brien. The making of this silent classic is also covered, and includes some fine photographs.

Doyle's gifts as a writer have never been in dispute. As the creator of Sherlock Holmes, he is arguably the most important author in the detective genre. His stature continues to grow, finally receiving attention from the academic community (historically, always the last to know). Curiously, his fine science fiction stories have been lost in the shuffle. It's time for a major revival of interest in the non-Sherlockian Doyle, and perhaps this deluxe *Lost World* will spur enthusiasm further.

The Wessex Press edition is the definitive *Lost World*. It is an essential piece for the library of any Doyle completist, science fiction and dinosaur buff, or anyone who likes fine writing and a rousing yarn.

—Bob Madison

#### WILLIS O'BRIEN: SPECIAL EFFECTS GENIUS

Steve Archer  
McFarland & Company, Inc., 1993  
Box 611, Jefferson, N.C. 28640  
226 pages - \$28.50

It was only a matter of time until a chronicle of the career of special effects pioneer Willis O'Brien appeared. Now it has been provided by Steve Archer, a 35-year-old British film editor/cameraman who has tapped the memories of animators

Ray Harryhausen and Jim Danforth as well as garnered quotes from a 1970 interview with Darlyne O'Brien (O'Brien's second wife), conducted by Kevin Brownlow. Actual biographical information is scant, the author opting instead for a chronological account of Obie's career, beginning with early animation experiments and his series of short subjects for the Thomas A. Edison Company, and ending in 1962 with his supervisory work on Stanley Kramer's *IT'S A MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD*. More pages are devoted to 1933's *KING KONG* and 1949's *MIGHTY JOE YOUNG* (O'Brien's "Big Three"), than to later pictures in which he was involved on a more peripheral level—sometimes, as in *THE ANIMAL WORLD* (1956), simply as an advisor.

The book's middle section consists of story ideas, some detailed, others no more than a few pages long, but enough to relate the general story line for unrealized film projects and television shows. These, along with storyboards and sketches, give the reader a glimpse of O'Brien's creativity during what must have been a frustrating period in his professional life. (None of these projects ever saw the light of day.) Archer devotes the remaining pages to biographical sketches of O'Brien's collaborators, including producer Merian C. Cooper, director Ernest B. Schoedsack, and fellow animators Harryhausen, Danforth, and Pete Peterson. (Archer manages to include himself as a "collaborator," a neat special effect of his own, since he was all of five at the time of O'Brien's last film job.) Cast and production credits for O'Brien's films are also included.

The book's weakest component is Archer's writing style, which could have benefited from a more involved approach. One senses a feeling of detachment, as if Archer is simply reporting events and not allowing any passion for his subject to show through (if indeed passion there is). It makes for a rather listless reading experience. Archer intended this as a reference, rather than a technical or biographical work, and points any interested reader to more explicit works. Though much of his information has been gleaned from earlier articles and books, it is of definite service to film scholarship to have this wealth of material on such an innovative technician as O'Brien packed between two covers.

—Richard Scrivani

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## IRISH McCALLA

Continued from page 77

**IM:** Yes, I played a nurse. I was on that for two or three days. I liked working with Sally Kellerman. Of course, I'd known Sally before. She ran around with our crowd. I was dating Gardner McKay at the time, and she was a friend of Gardner's, too. We all hung around the coffee houses in those days. All the young actors.

**SS:** When did you give up acting?

**IM:** As soon as my paintings were making enough that I could pay the bills and not have to make any more personal appearances or travel anymore. I'd already been to a lot of places. I was ready to settle down, and that's what I did. At that time, I'd gotten married to my second husband, an actor named Patrick Horgan. We were married and we were always apart, and I thought, "Well, this is no way to have a marriage." So I quit the business. If I'd stayed in it we'd probably still be married, because we got along fine as long as we were apart! (Laughs)

**SS:** Have you ever regretted giving up acting?

**IM:** Never have. Except when I see the money they're all making!

**SS:** You were operated on for a brain tumor several years ago, yet you have such a positive attitude about everything.

**IM:** They said that's why I recovered so well. It's no use having a bad attitude; it just makes you unhappy. (Laughs) I'm a very determined person. I just made up my mind that I would get my strength back, because they said the tumor could come back again. But I don't think it will. In the meantime, I'm going to live every single moment. When you live moment to moment, whatever you're doing right now is the most important thing in your life. And then you live fully, right now.

**SS:** One last question: What do you think of people who point to Sheena as a symbol for women's liberation?

**IM:** One thing that women's lib has done—which I object to—is that they put men on the defensive. God knows, I'm as independent as a hog on ice, but this thing of "I'll open my own door!" I want the man to open the door for me. In my own life, I take care of myself; I earn my own money. I support myself. I live



Don't look, now, gang, but that cage behind you is full of SHE DEMONS!

alone. But if I'm out on a date, I want to be treated like I'm something special. I don't want "Let's be equal." I used to say, "Equal! Why should I be equal? I always thought I was superior!" (Laughs)

**SS:** Still, it must be flattering.

**IM:** Yes, but when they start in saying, "You were the first women's libber," I say, "No, no . . . Sheena's the Queen. The Queen is above everybody. She's the boss. She's in her own element. And as far as being liberated . . . well, listen, I was never captured!"



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Maureen O'Sullivan and Johnny Weissmuller were the easiest actors in Hollywood to costume in **TARZAN AND HIS MATE** (1934).

## JUNGLE GEMS

Continued from page 73

band; Gloria Talbott (1958's *I MARRIED A MONSTER FROM OUTER SPACE*) is perfect in the role of naive fiancée; and Grant Williams, though not as sympathetic as he was in *THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN* (1957), still manages to convey a sincere credibility. As one reviewer put it, "They don't make 'em like that any more!"

The jungle theme continued to prevail in films of the '60s and '70s, albeit with considerably less panache. Many of the titles represent outright remakes of old classics. Despite the elaborate technical wizardry utilized in these films, many aficionados still prefer the original version over the modern remake. For example, the 1976 version of *KING KONG* isn't even worthy of comparison to the original.

The jungle film seems to have fared a bit better in the '80s. Brooke Shields and Christopher Atkins delivered a successful remake of *THE BLUE LAGOON* (1980), Phoebe Cates and Willie Aames followed with a less than stellar *PARADISE* (1981), and Miles O'Keeffe revived the legendary man of the jungle in *TARZAN, THE APE MAN* (1981). One of the most interesting, if not the best, of the modern Tarzans was *GREYSTOKE: THE LEGEND OF TARZAN, LORD OF THE APES* (1984), with Christopher Lambert. This film both pleased and disappointed fans. Many considered this to be a more faithful adaptation of what Burroughs had in mind; the story depicted Tarzan's early years and focused on his heritage (he was John Clayton, an heir of the Earl of Greystoke). Those who were disappointed, however, felt that there was

too much of an attempt to educate, or "civilize" the beloved character.

So far, *JURASSIC PARK* (1993) remains the most notable contribution of the '90s. It's also a worthy example of what can be accomplished when the actors give at least as good a performance as the computer. Still, some of us can't forget the films of yesteryear—and those sultry sirens clad in leopard skin. Anyone for a *SHEENA, QUEEN OF THE JUNGLE* film festival?



## RAY HARRYHAUSEN

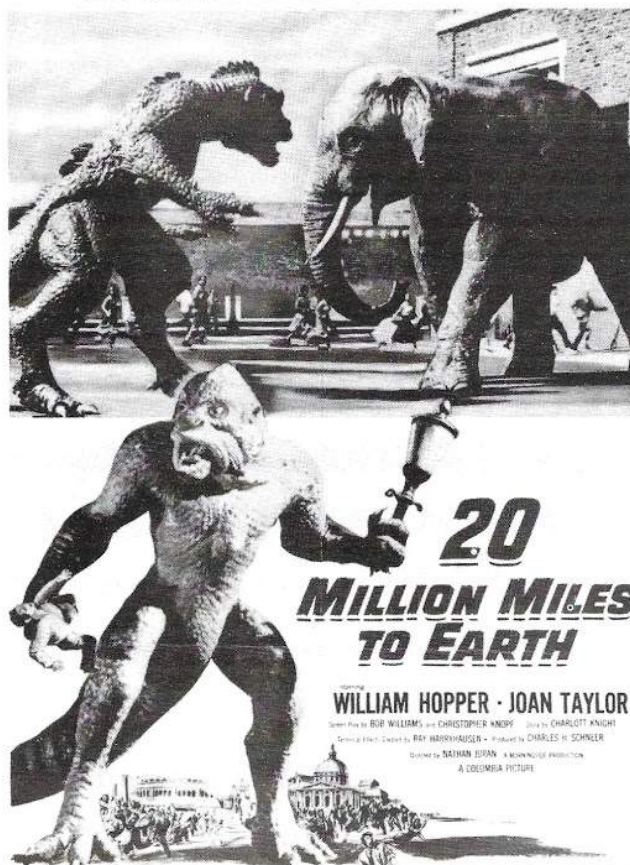
Continued from page 44

ond unit before the director even came on the picture! Several pictures were started that way, so I always had to wear many hats. Even though I wasn't credited for it—I was only credited for the special effects—but in my naive way I thought it would be horrendous to see Harryhausen, Harryhausen, Harryhausen on the credits. After I got over that, I realized that if you don't toot your own horn nobody else will toot it for you."

A multi-hyphenate before it was fashionable! A gentleman and artist to the core. Though retired from film-making, Ray has entered the digital age in the form of a delightful website dedicated to his work. (<http://www.leba.net/~jrodkey/harryhusn.html>) If you're in the mood for a bit of true movie magic, go out and rent a Ray Harryhausen film tonight.



## OUT-OF-SPACE CREATURE INVADES THE EARTH!





## TERROR IS A MAN

Continued from page 92

might have proven their theories and been enshrined among the immortals of science.

Richard Derr's character serves as a sounding board for Girard's theories and a comforting haven for the love-starved Frances. Best remembered as the star of George Pal's *WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE* (1951), Derr was always somewhat stilted as an actor. In *TERROR IS A MAN*, though, he manages to convey warmth, sincerity, and rugged masculinity.

Crowned Miss Denmark in 1954, lovely Greta Thyssen had a sporadic acting career, appearing in such American films as *BUS STOP* (1956) and *SHADOWS* (1960), as well as the Danish/American coproduction *JOURNEY TO THE SEVENTH PLANET* (1962). Her character in *TERROR IS A MAN* stands in stark contrast to that of Lederer's: she sees the product of her husband's work as not merely a soulless animal, but a tortured being. We empathize with her revulsion toward Girard's experiments and her pity for the cat-man.

In supporting roles, Oscar Keesee is sufficiently unappetizing as the lustful Walter. His real-life son Peyton plays little Tiago, the boy who courageously puts the dying creature out to sea (yet another Frankensteinian reference).

The cursed legacy of *Blood Island* did not end with *TERROR IS A MAN*. Under the Hemisphere Pictures banner, Kane W. Lynn and Eddie Romero (in partnership with former American teen star John Ashley) co-produced three more horror thrillers with *Blood Island* as the locale. In *BRIDES OF BLOOD* (1968), directed by *TERROR IS A MAN*'s Gerry de Leon, a wealthy plantation owner (Mario Montenegro) falls victim to atomic mutation and becomes the Evil One, claiming nubile native sacrifices as his victims. De Leon also handled the directorial chores on *MAD DOCTOR OF BLOOD ISLAND* (1969), another lurid man-into-monster opus with the accent on sex-and-splatter. Third in the *Blood Island* trilogy, *BEAST OF BLOOD* (1970) was a direct sequel to its predecessor. At one point in the story, the



**TERROR IS A MAN** and, more often than not, the victim is a woman: in this case, Selena (Lilia Duran).

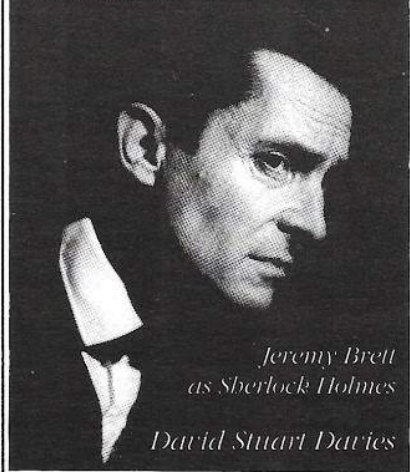
head of the vega-man (half-man/ half-vegetable) is separated from its body and electrically kept alive, thus enabling the monster to continue its reign of terror from the comfort of the laboratory.

Hemisphere's entire horror output, including *THE BLOOD DRINKERS* (1966), *BLOOD FIEND* (1968), *BLOOD DEMON* (1970), and *BRAIN OF BLOOD* (1971), catered to the lowest common denominator and were tailor-made for dusk-to-dawn shock marathons. In 1972, Eddie Romero returned to *The Island of Dr. Moreau* as the inspiration for *TWILIGHT PEOPLE*, released by Dimension Pictures. Coproduced by and starring *Blood Island* alumnus John Ashley, this action-oriented exploitation programmer featured a veritable menagerie of manimals (à la *ISLAND OF LOST SOULS*), including the Panther Woman (Pam Grier in full-blown panther make-up from the neck up).

It gives one pause to think that this slate of grossed-out, gore-and-sex saturated, gimmick-heavy cheapies were brought to you in part by the same men responsible for *TERROR IS A MAN*, one of the most undervalued chillers of its period.



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## SCREEN

*Continued from page 31*

LA VS. FRANKENSTEIN. (He toyed with the idea of turning this story of monsters at a seaside arcade into another biker flick, SATAN'S BLOOD FREAKS, and Adamson shot a few scenes with Tamblyn and the gang.) The finished product, with its tatty monsters, famously surreal narrative, and roster of elderly horror actors (Naish, Angelo Rossito, and a surprisingly vigorous Lon Chaney Jr.), is creaky, lurid, and self-aware Guignol. It has, of course, a worldwide following.

The package includes two slightly battered outtakes (a first cut of Regina Carrol's "freak-out" dance and the original ending of BLOOD),

a few "behind-the-scenes" photos, a 30-second TV spot, and the original trailer (a hoot). Also featured are John Bloom, Jim (DALLAS) Davis, Greydon Clarke, the immortal Zandor Vorkov, and Scarlet Street's own Forrest J Ackerman as the doomed Dr. Beaumont. The still of Naish's severed head in an issue of *Famous Monsters* frightened at least one 10-year-old boy back in '71.

—Ronald Dale Garmon

## NEWS HOUND

*Continued from page 23*

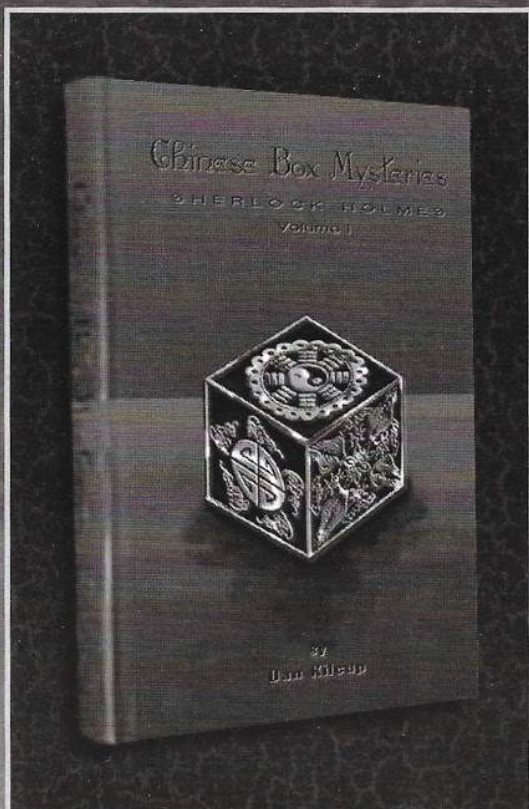
tions in an extended 48-minute suite—an "audio journey" culled from Snow's 50 hours of music from the show's first three seasons . . . In November, KQED Books will release *Mystery! A Celebration*, marking

the history and the highlights of the long-running PBS series that has brought memorably mysterious British productions to Stateside TV audiences for over 15 years.

Gone, but never forgotten: producers Pandro S. Berman and Albert "Cubby" Broccoli; definitive film noir cinematographer John Alton; SEVENTH VICTIM screenwriter Charles O'Neal; makeup pioneer Max Factor Jr.; title designer Saul Bass; actors Guy Doleman, Michael Fox, Margaux Hemingway, David Opatoshu, Jack Weston, Vito Scotti, and Jo Van Fleet; the screen's most glamorous hitch-hiker, Claudette Colbert; and the that Lovely Luawana Lady, Dorothy Lamour.







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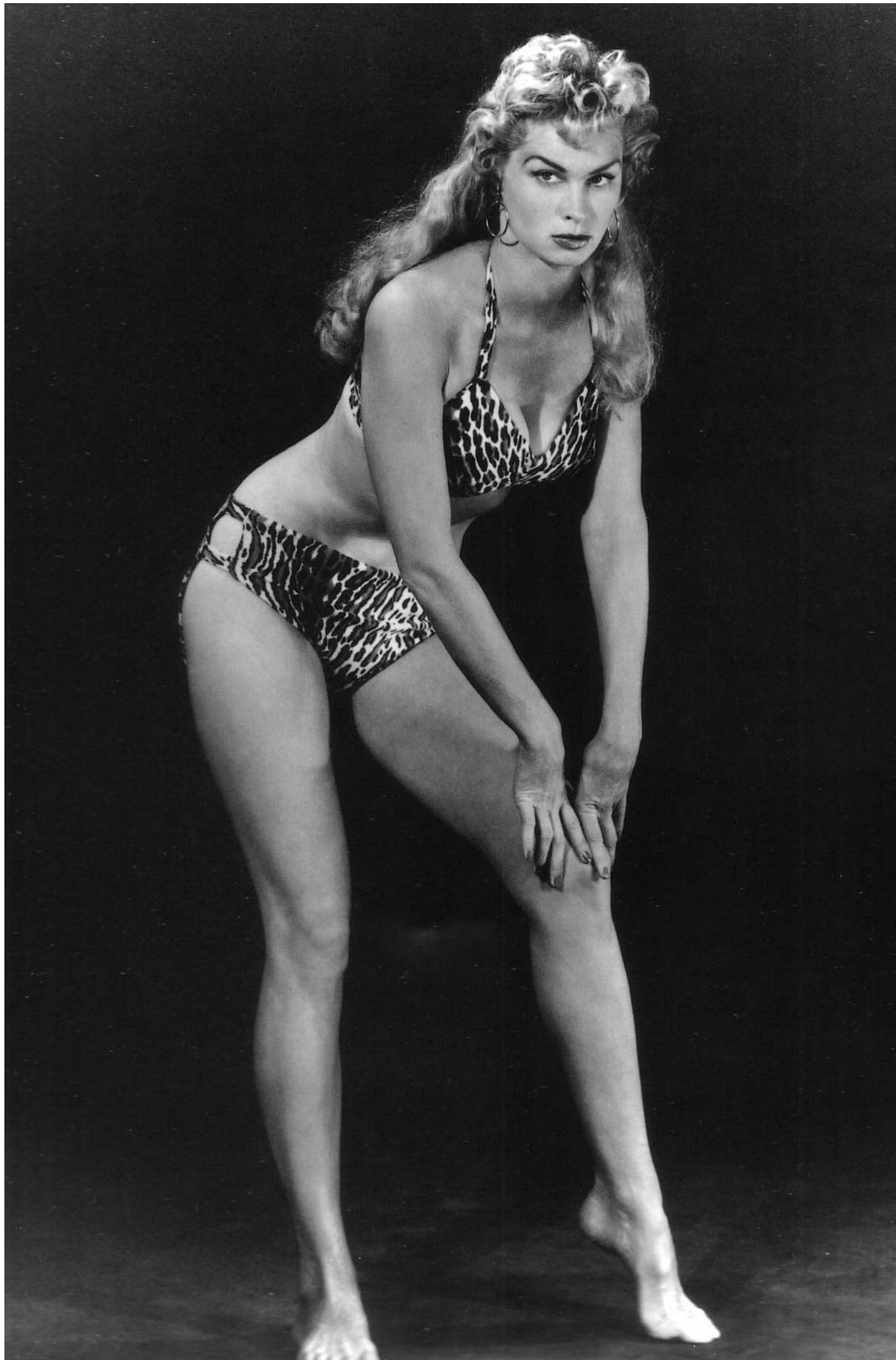
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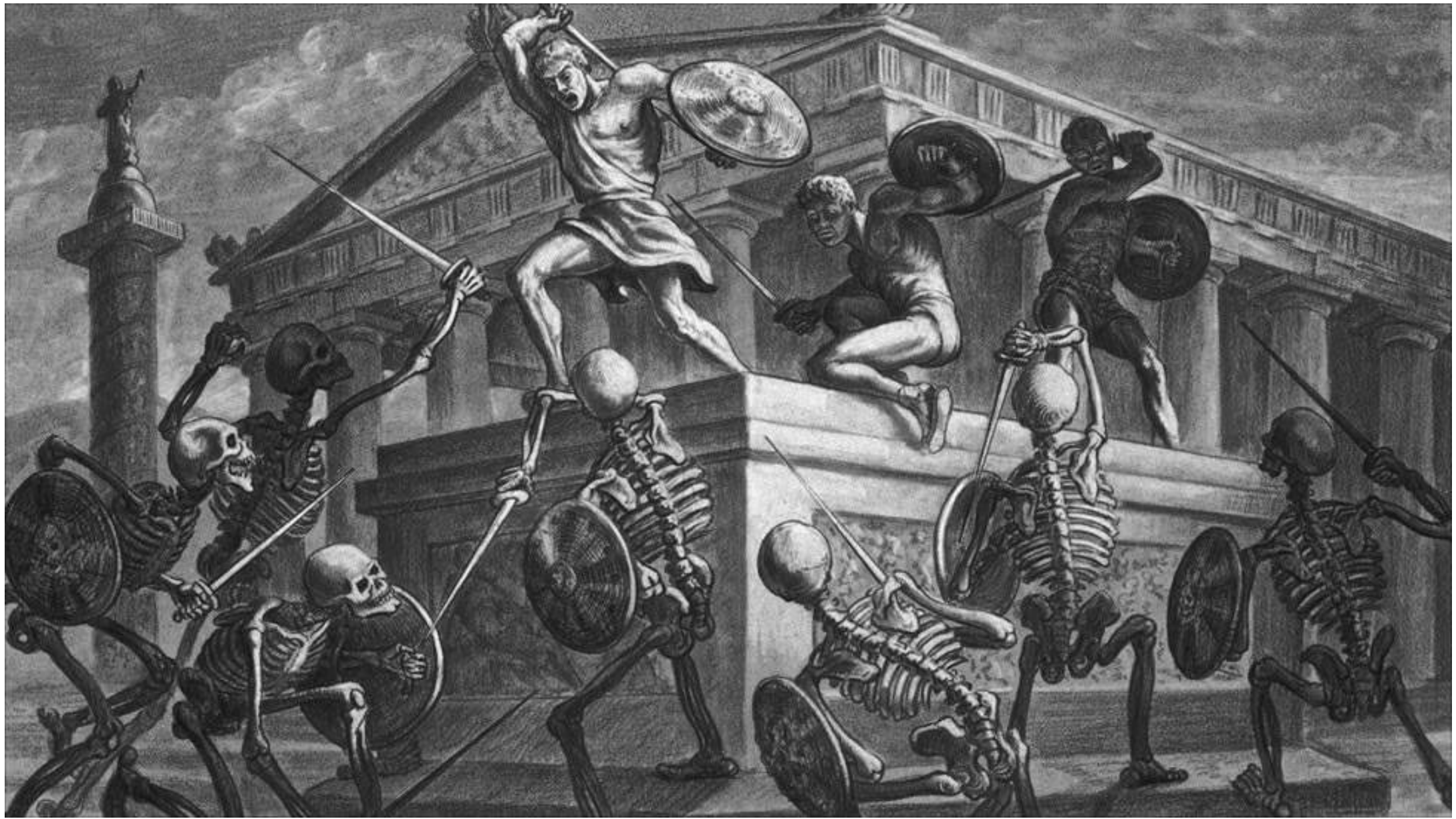








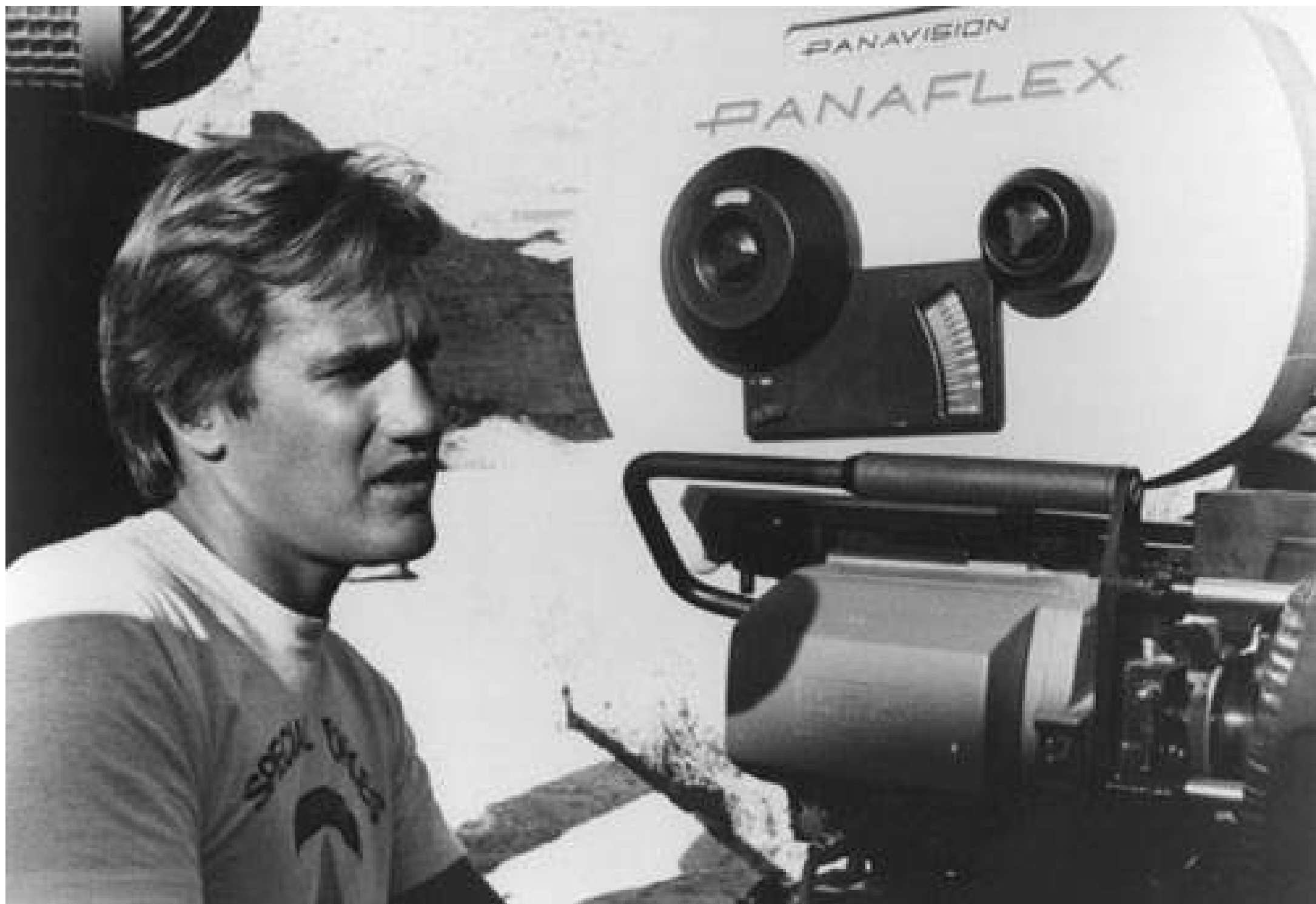




































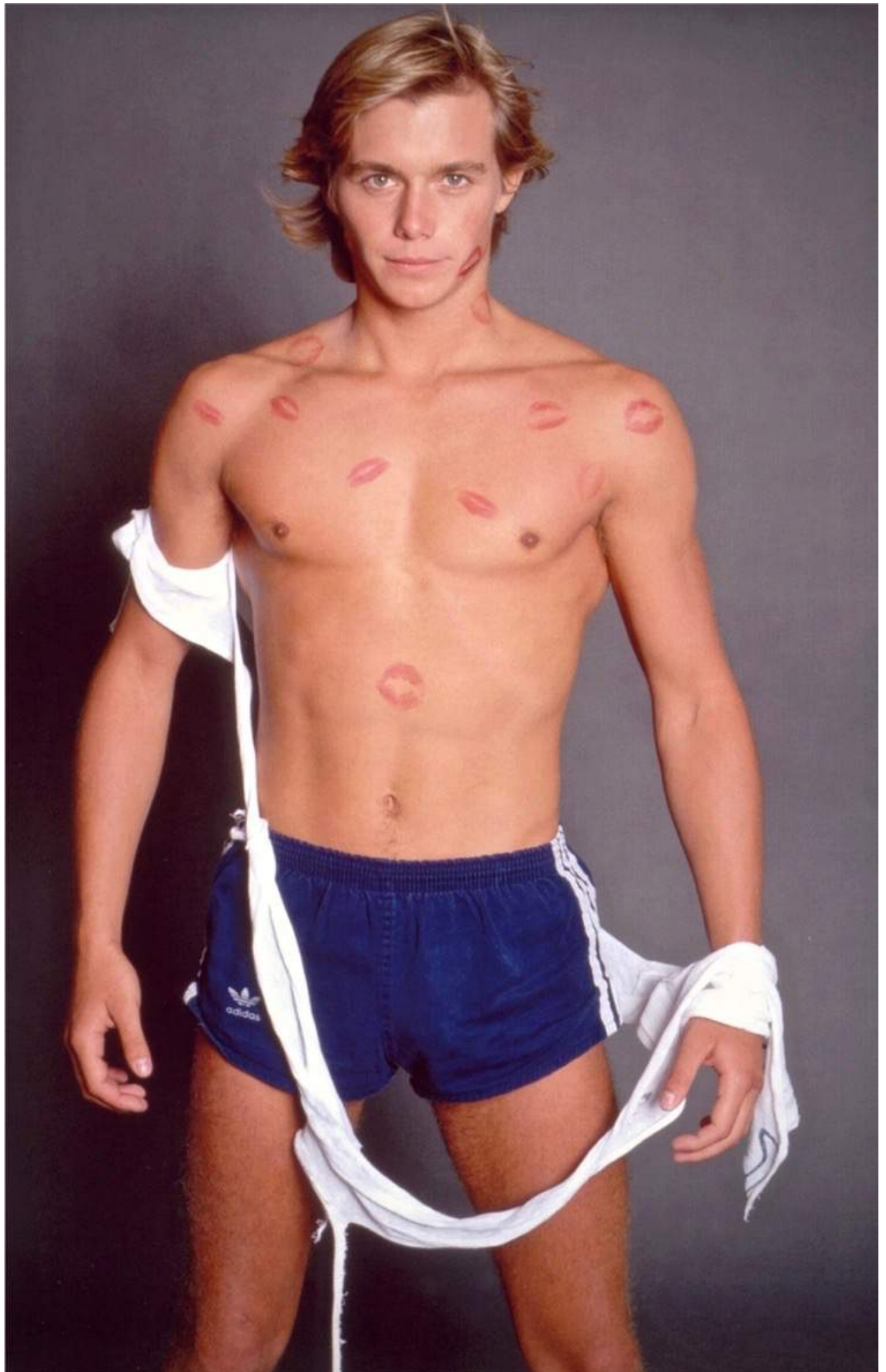




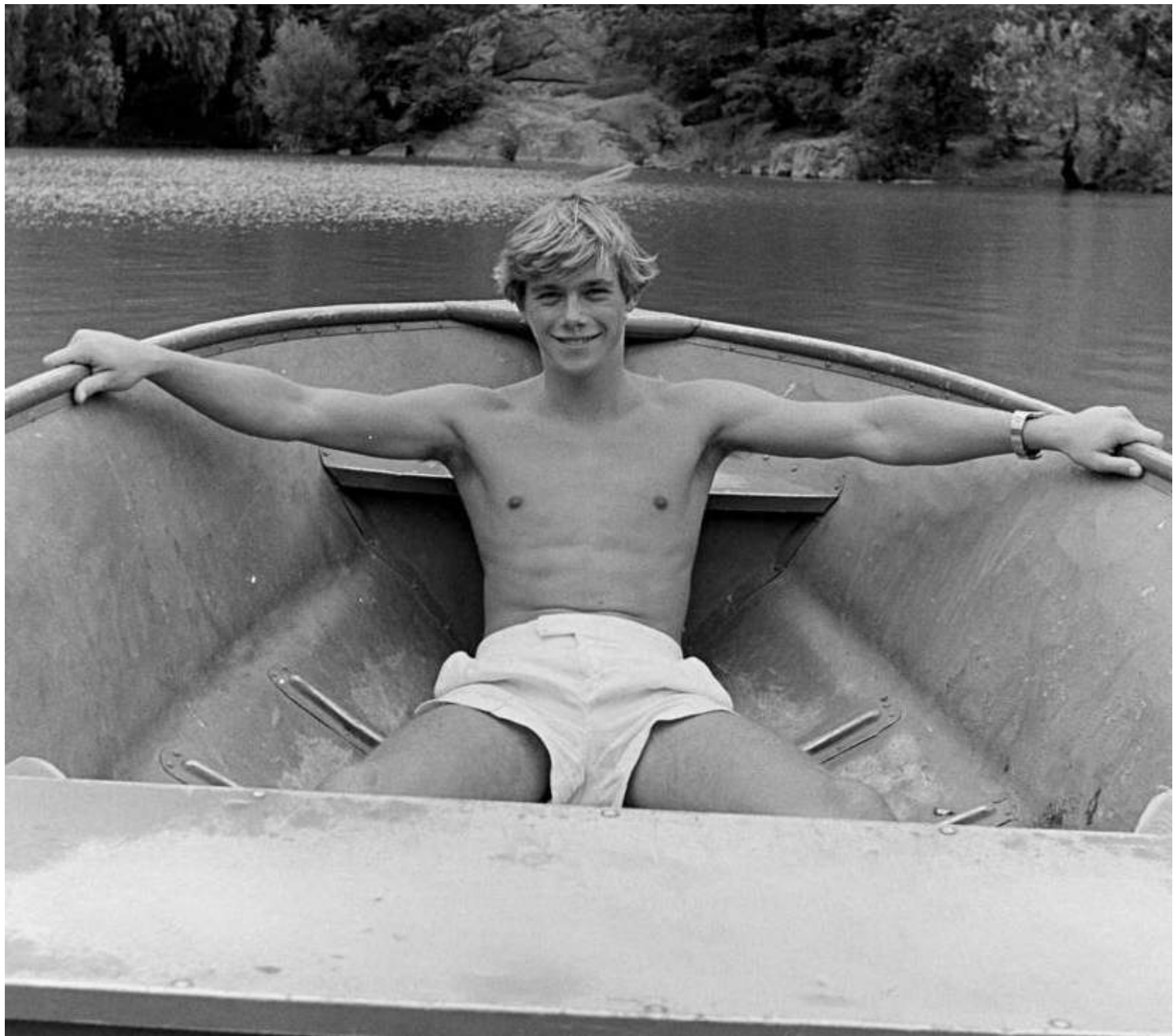








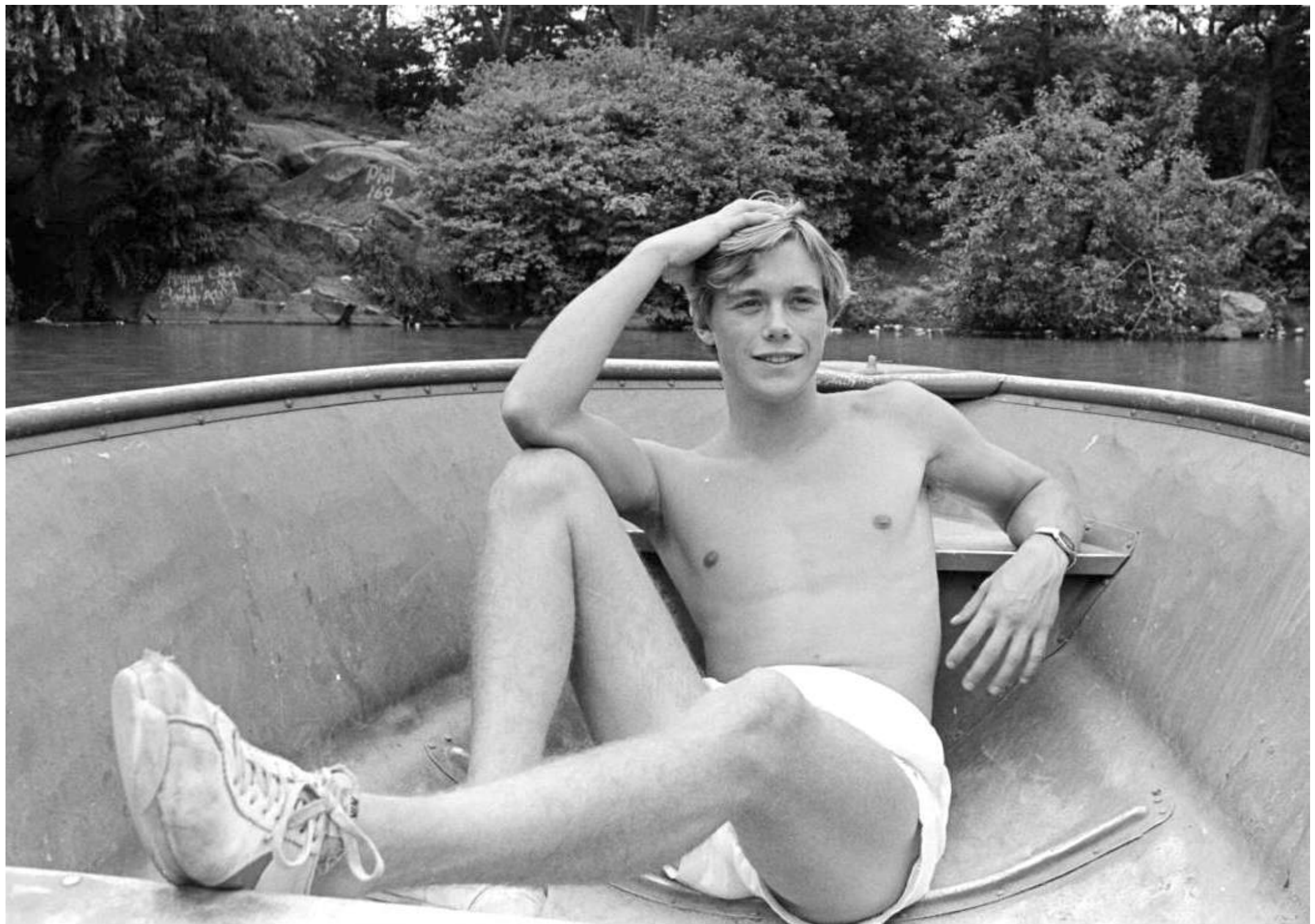
























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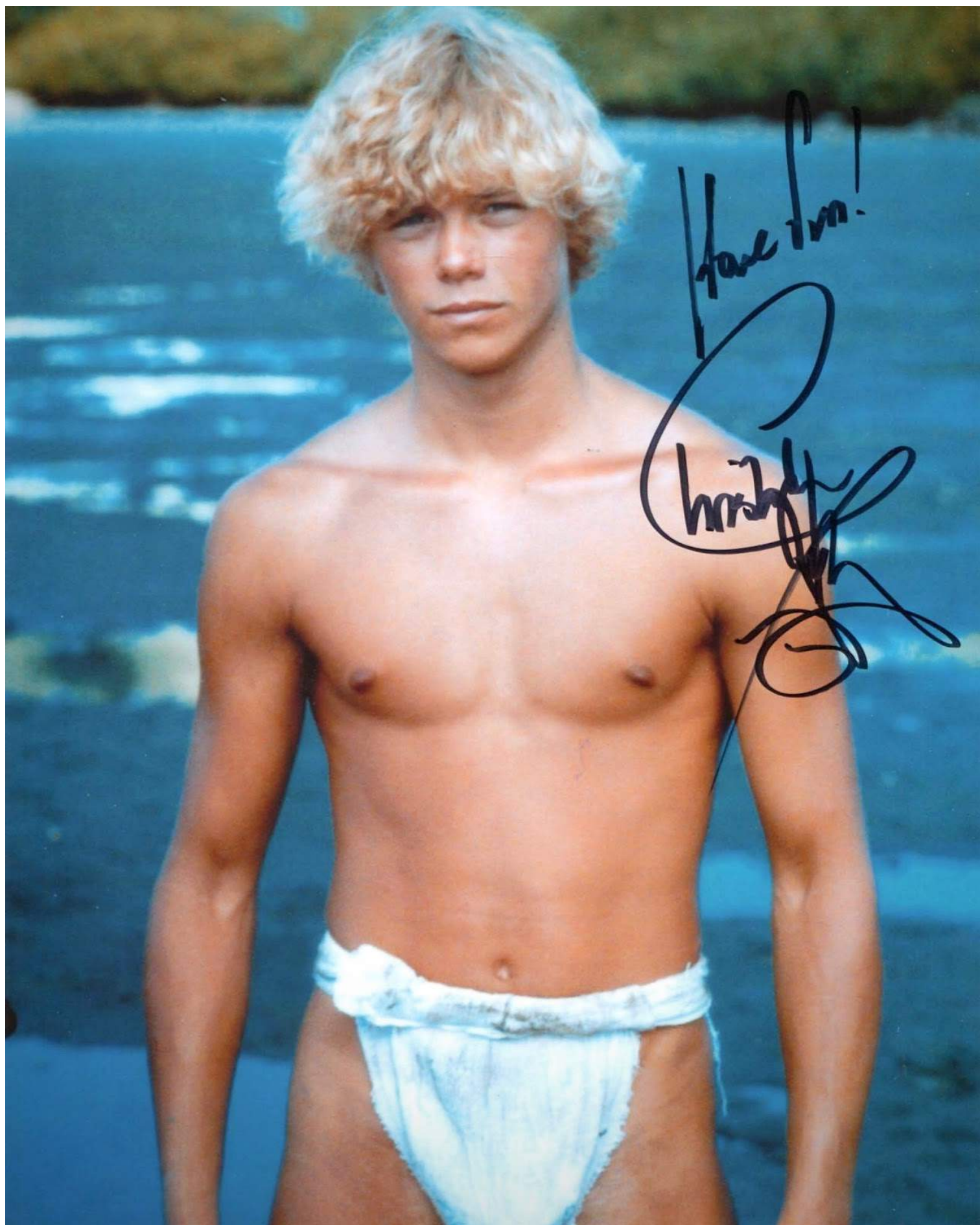
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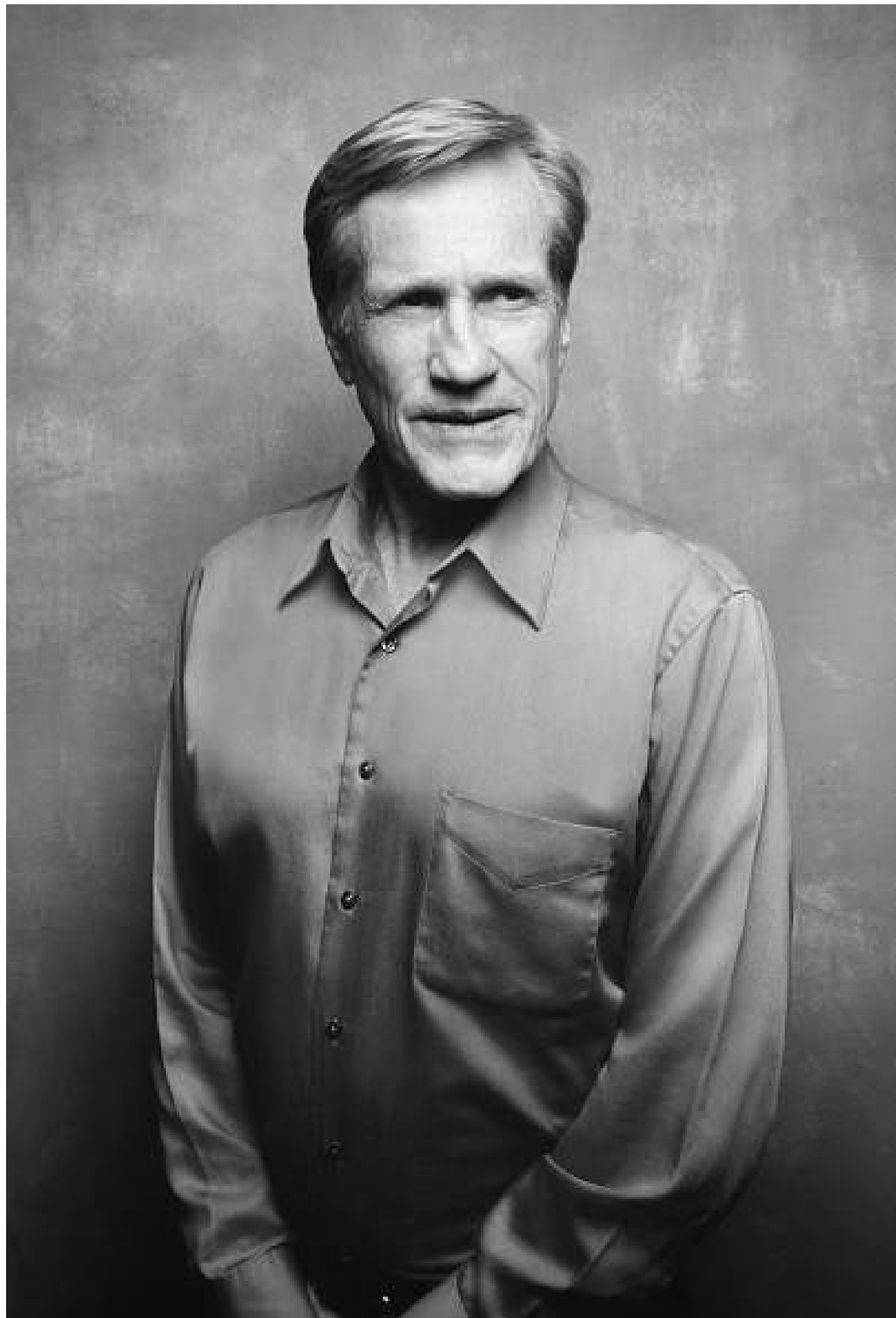
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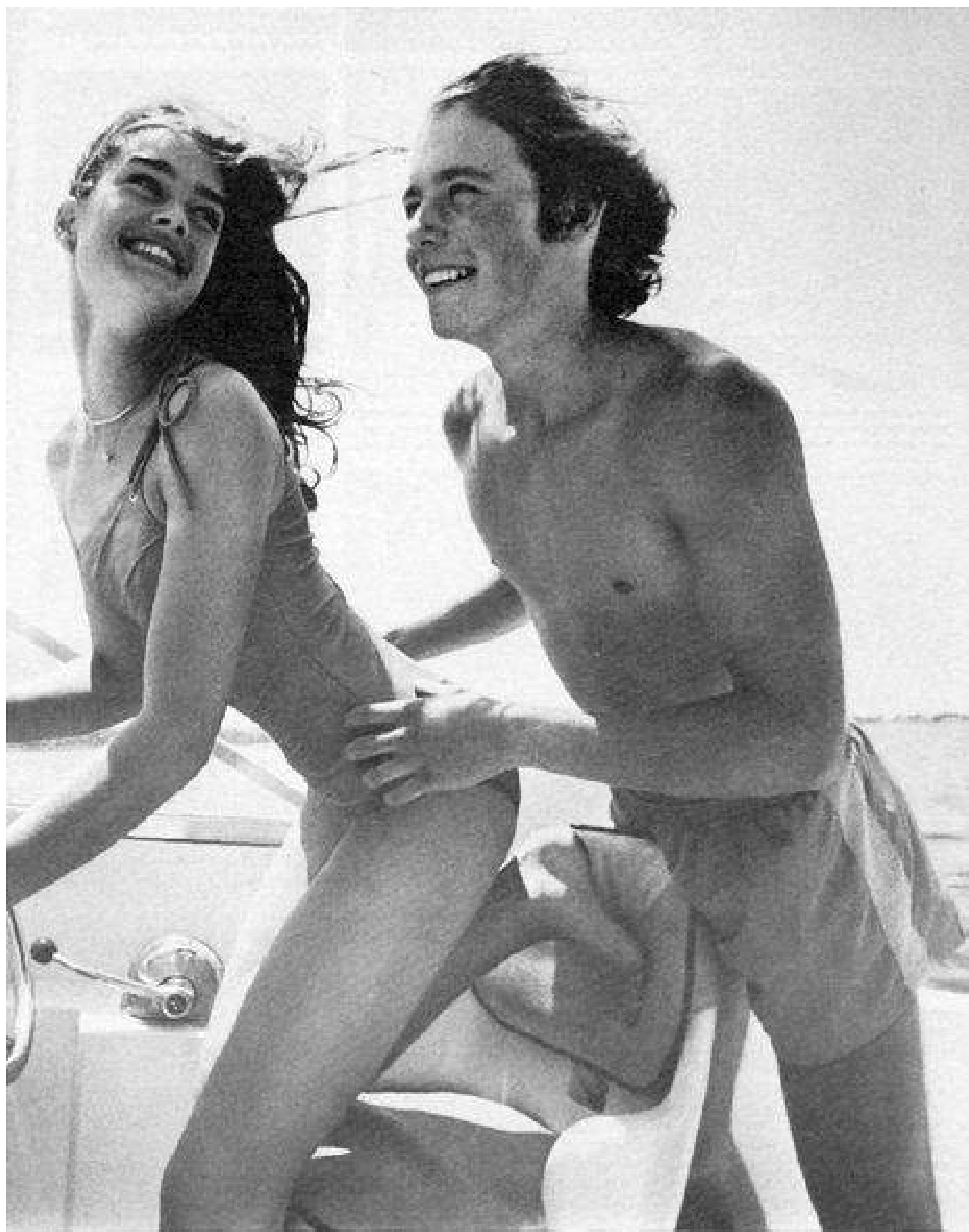
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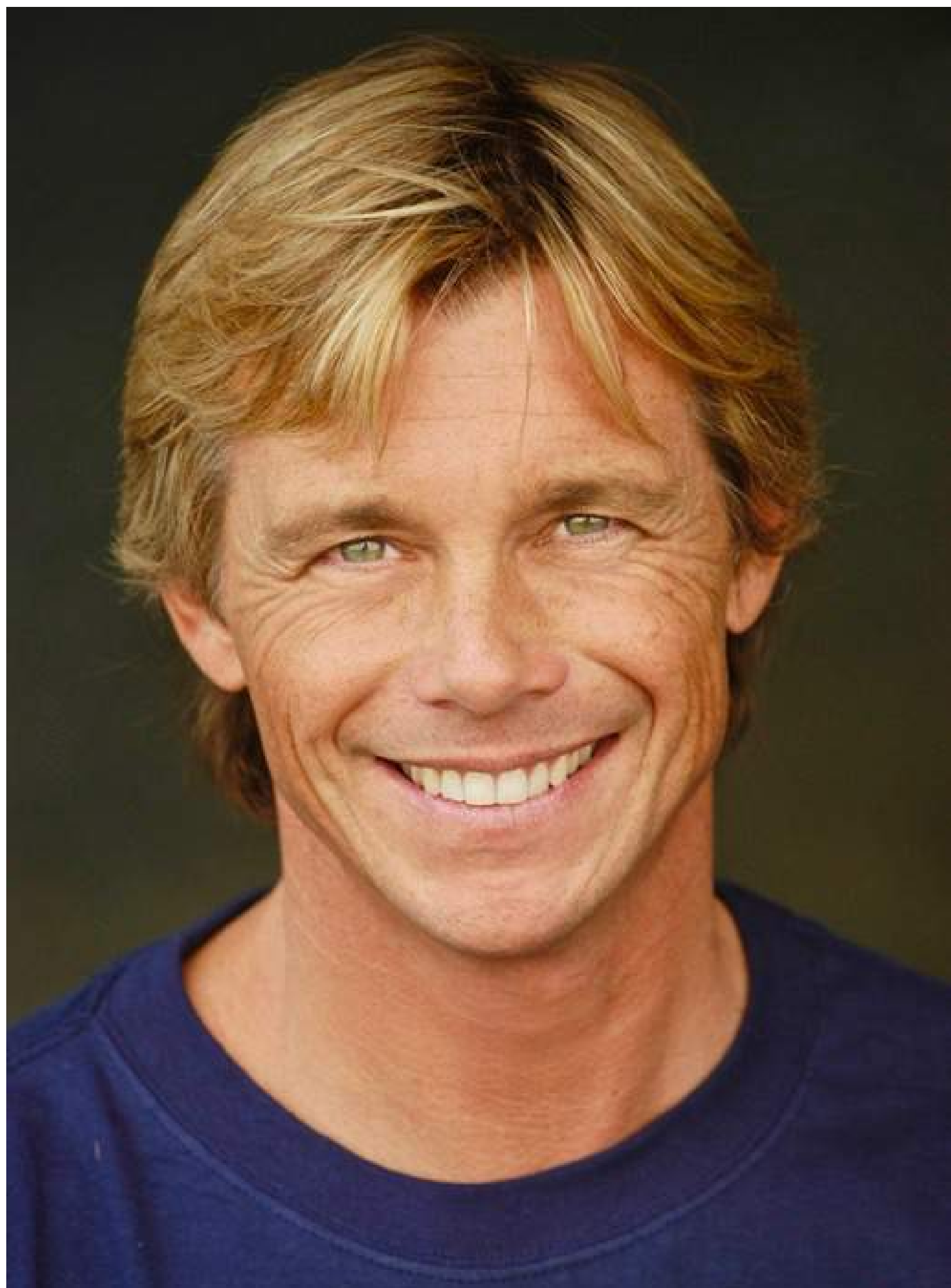


























































## 'KING KONG' SETS RECORD

WOR-TV New York last week claimed to have attracted the largest audience in New York tv history with a week's showing of the motion picture, "King Kong," on the station's *Million Dollar Movie*. According to General Manager Gordon Gray, an estimated 9,395,820 viewers in 3,758,330 homes made up the audience, based on a TelePulse survey which gave the movie an unduplicated rating of 79.7 for the week March 5-11.



**MONKEY BUSINESS** • Television has many uses, as Thomas F. O'Neil's still-expanding RKO-Teleradio Pictures domination is finding out. After seeing ratings (placed at 79.7, unduplicated audience) racked up in week's showing of 23-year-old "King Kong" on WOR-TV New York, parent company officials cancelled plans to play it on other o&o stations, intend to release it to theatres instead.











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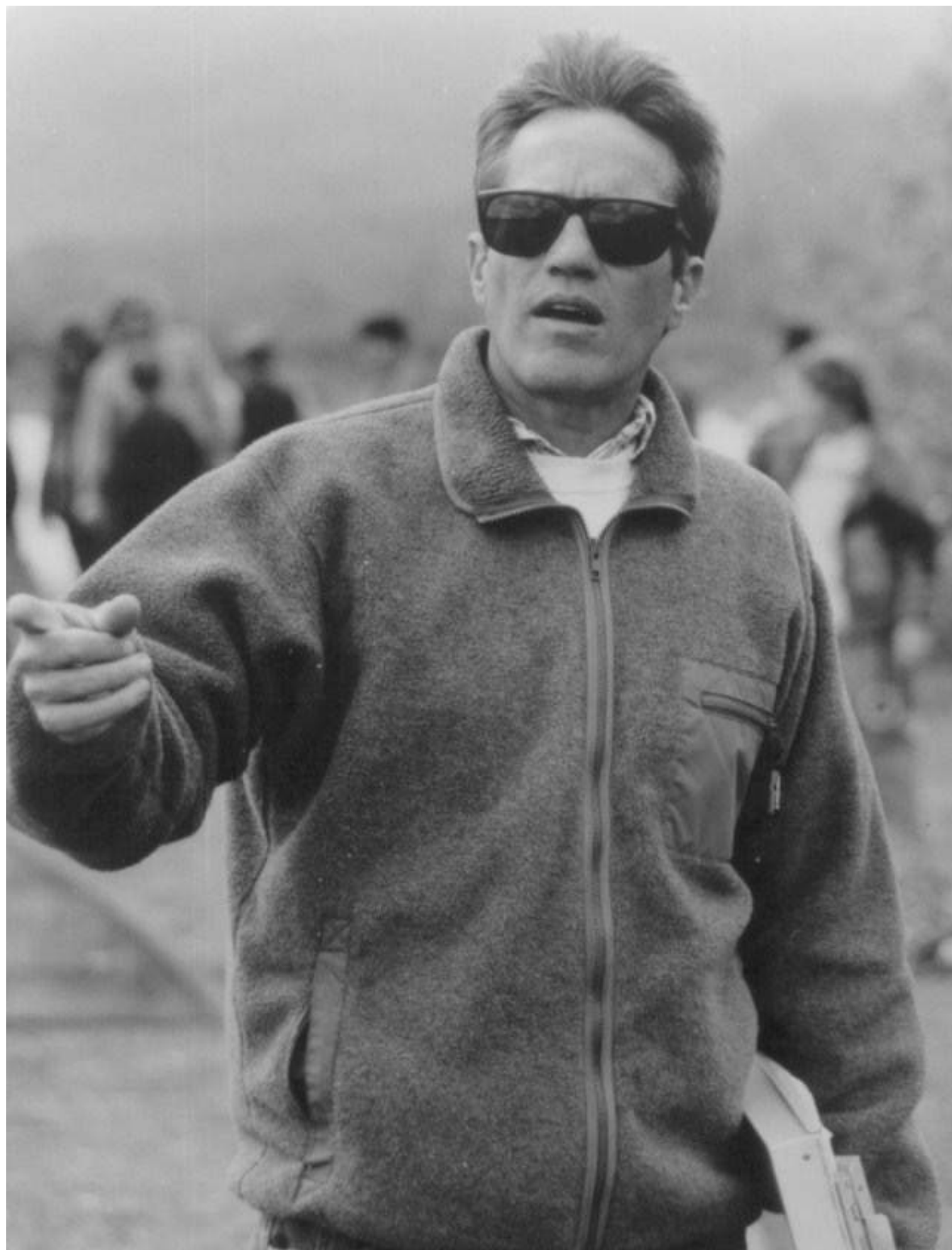
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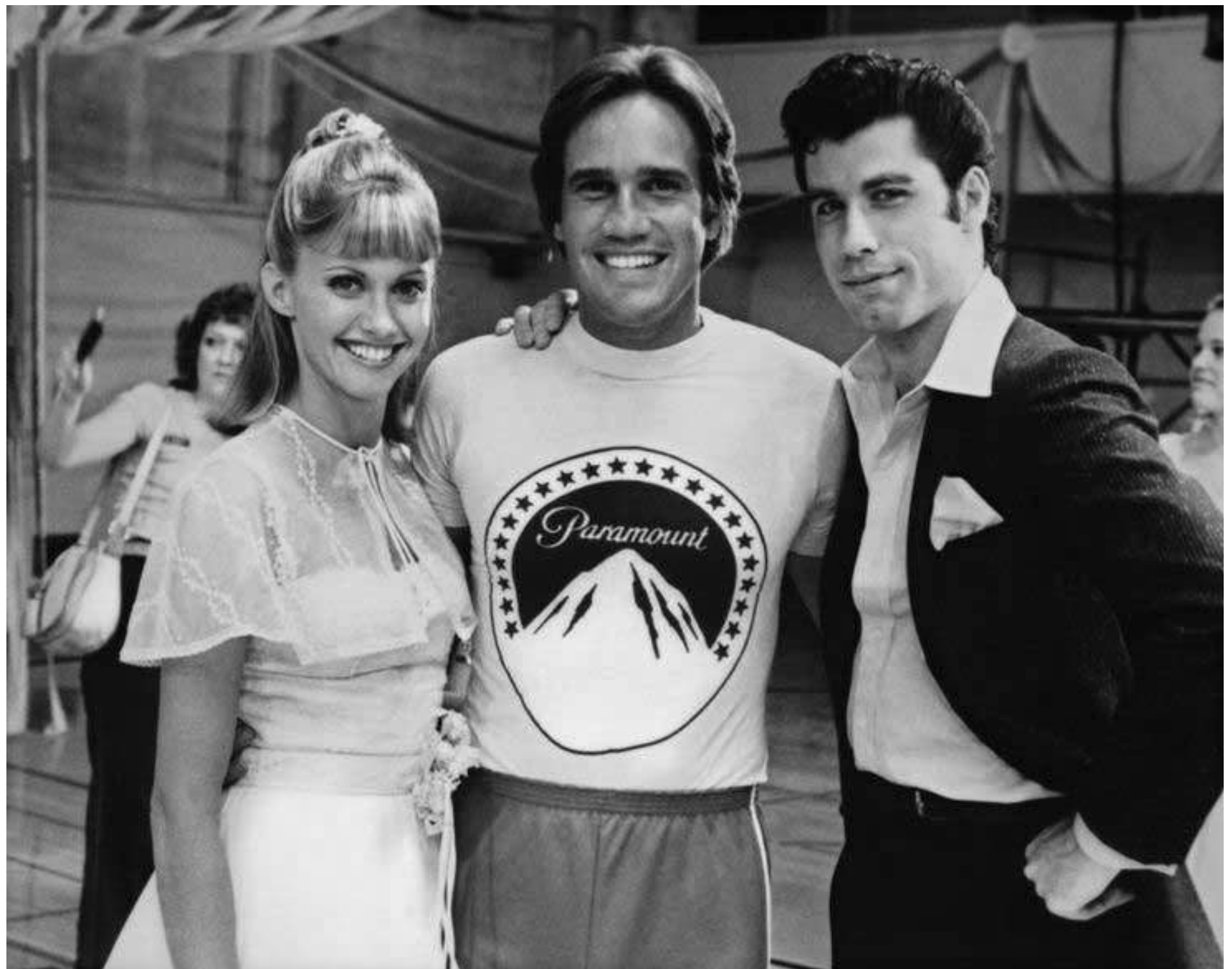
















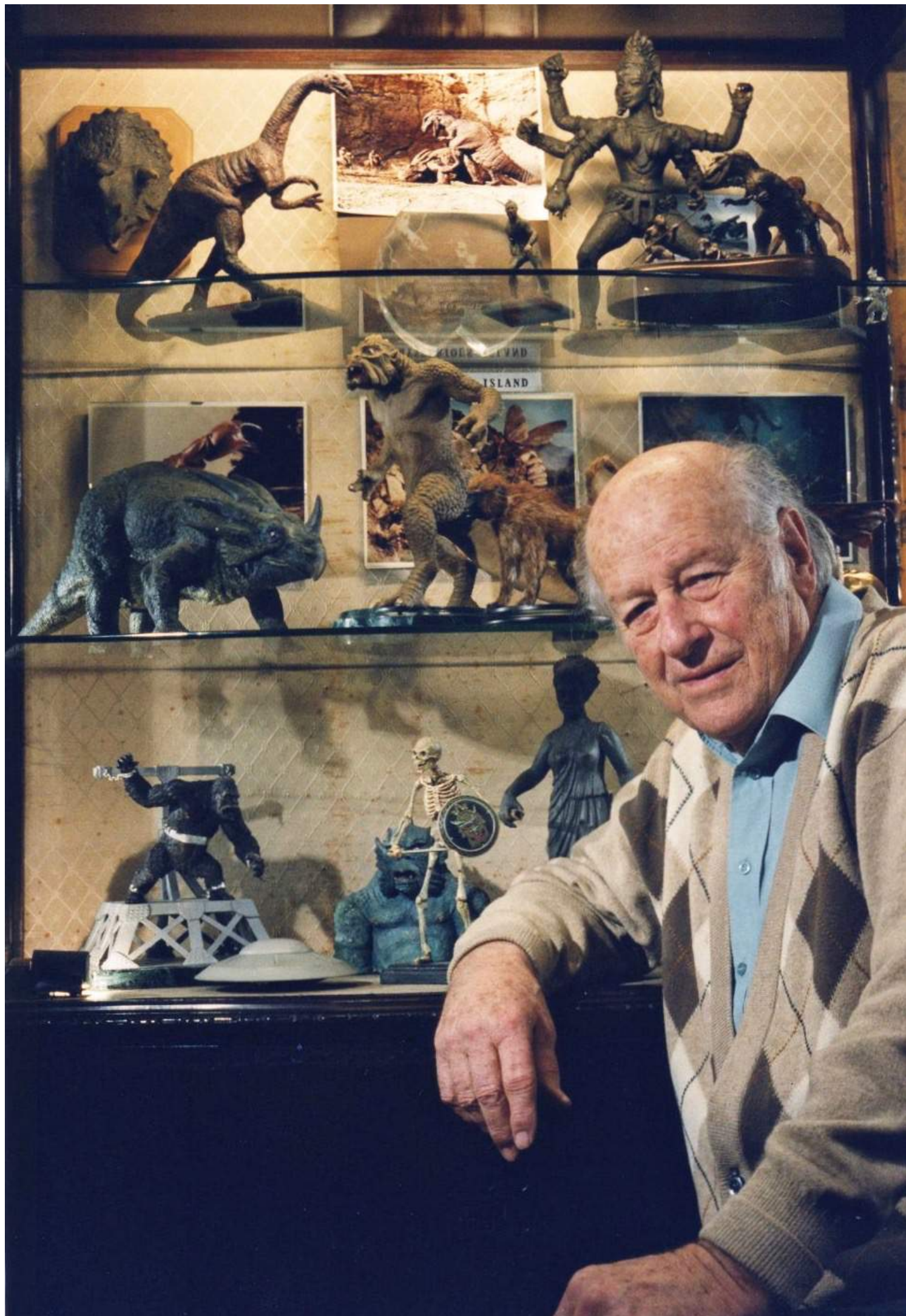


























All artefact photographs courtesy of  
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### Ray Haryhausen's first attempt at re-creating Kong.

This is a marionette puppet circa 1934/5. Ray made the paper-mâché face, and his mother made the fur body.



When Ray Haryhausen saw *King Kong* in 1933, aged 13, it was to be the beginning of his fascination with the world of stop-motion animation. Little did he realise then that seeing this film would alter the direction of his entire life and eventually see him become one of the world's most loved and respected men in this field of work.

Ray, who turns 90 this year, was awarded an Oscar in 1992 for his services to the film industry and awarded a 'star' on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1993.

Ray said before I went, "Why are you bothering- it's just crap" and I said, "Crap to you is film history to others" and what we found was simply incredible.  
 (Tony Dalton)





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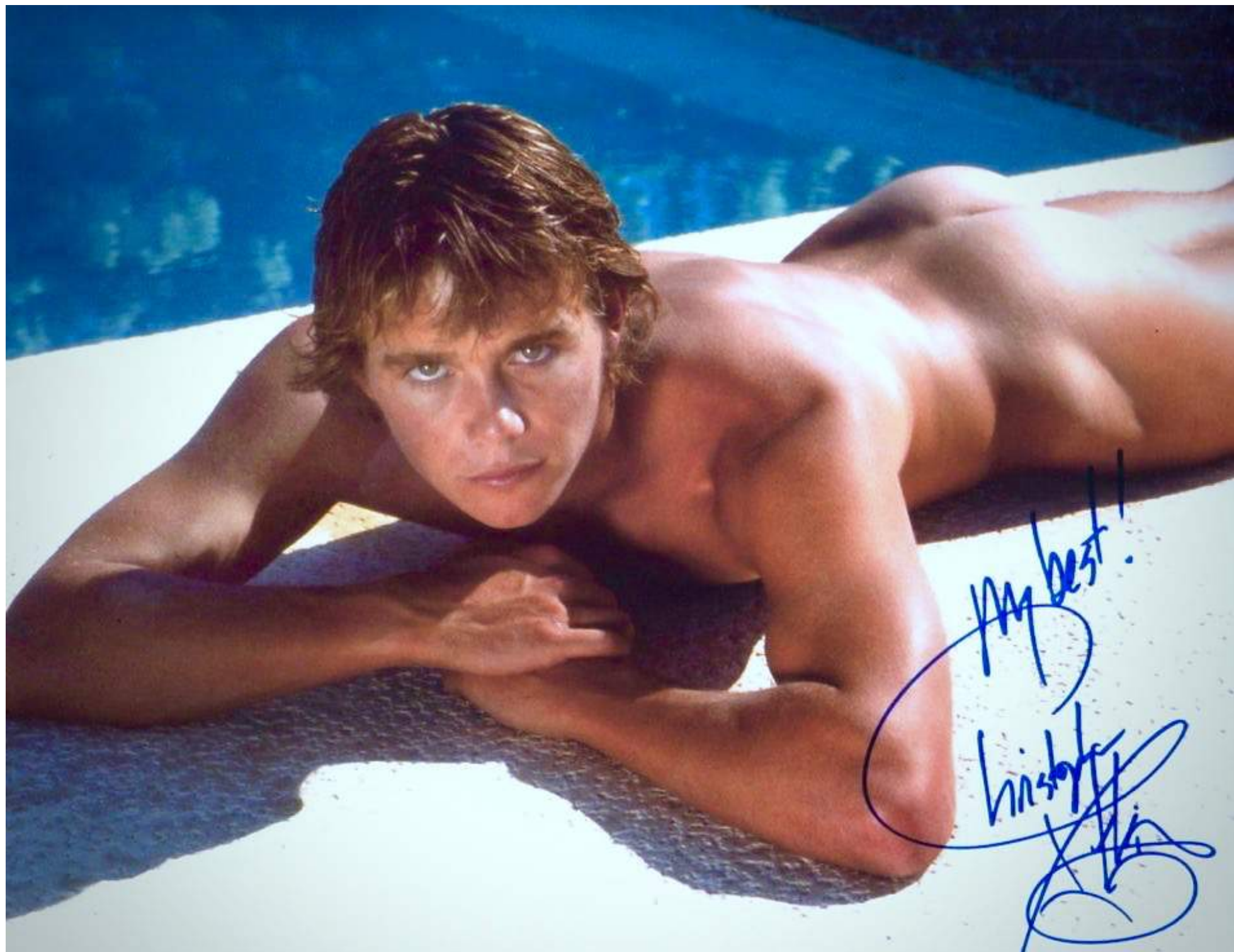
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**FRANCIS LEDERER and GRETA THYSSEN in**  
**"TERROR IS A MAN"**

A Lynn-Romero Production • Released by Valiant Films Corp.

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# A UNIQUE Experience in motion picture TERROR!

SO DIFFERENT—  
a Bell System Has  
Been Installed For  
the **SQUEAMISH** and  
**FAINT-HEARTED!!!**  
When the Bell Rings  
we suggest you  
**CLOSE YOUR EYES!**  
It will ring again  
when it's safe to  
open them!



#### The Doctor

He gave up  
a Park  
Avenue  
practice



#### The Wife

She'd do anything  
to get  
back to  
society



#### The Intruder

He knew this  
was against  
the laws  
of nature



starring FRANCIS LEDERER • GRETA THYSEN • RICHARD DERR • A Lynn-Romero Production • Directed by Gerry de Leon  
Screenplay by Harry Paul Harber • A Valiant Films Release



**WE DARE YOU  
TO SEE IT!**

**IT WILL SCARE THE YELL  
OUT OF YOU!**

# BLOOD CREATURE

starting FRANCIS LEDERER • GRETA THYSSSEN • RICHARD DERR

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WARNING  
BELL SYSTEM**  
Has Been  
Installed For  
**PUBLIC  
PROTECTION!**

**SO TERRIFYING**  
a Bell System Has  
Been Installed For  
the **SQUEAMISH** and  
**FAINT-HEARTED!!!**  
When the Bell Rings  
we suggest you  
**CLOSE YOUR EYES!**  
It will ring again  
when it's safe to  
open them!

**BRING YOUR OWN  
TRANQUILIZER!**

**A MONSTER  
SCIENCE CREATED  
But Could Not  
Destroy!**

**MORE HORRIFYING THAN  
FRANKENSTEIN!  
MORE TERRIFYING THAN  
DRACULA!**

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CHILDREN

STARRING  
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SCREENPLAY BY  
LOU MORHEIM AND FRED FREIBERGER

Suggested by the Sensational **SATURDAY EVENING POST** Story by RAY BRADBURY

PRODUCED BY HAL CHESTER AND JACK DIETZ DIRECTED BY EUGENE LOURIE

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THIS PICTURE PRODUCED BY ANTHONY STODOLSKY. PRINTED BY S. K. CURRIE, INC. NEW YORK. CO. SYDNEY.











